

WEST

JAN 2017
The Village, aka The Promised Land, is built at Grove Shafter Park

RADICAL

CHANGE

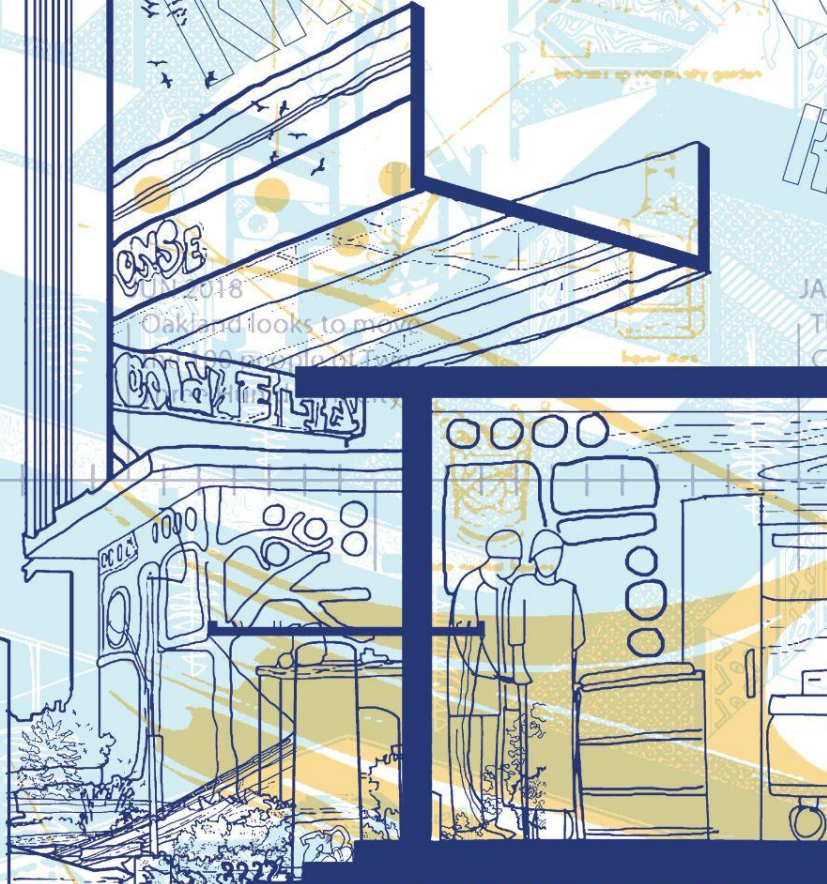
OAKLAND

STORIES

EXPERIENCE

SEP 2022
Caltrans crews remove unhoused residents from Wood Steet

CO-CREATION



Urban Cultures: Reading and Representing the Urban

Spring, 2025

Instructor:

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Community Partners:

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Adam Garrett-Clark, Neighborhood

Architecture Division
California College of the Arts



Urban Cultures: Reading and Representing the Urban

Bachelor of Architecture Seminar - Design Media 4, Spring 2025

Architecture Division, California College of the Arts, San Francisco

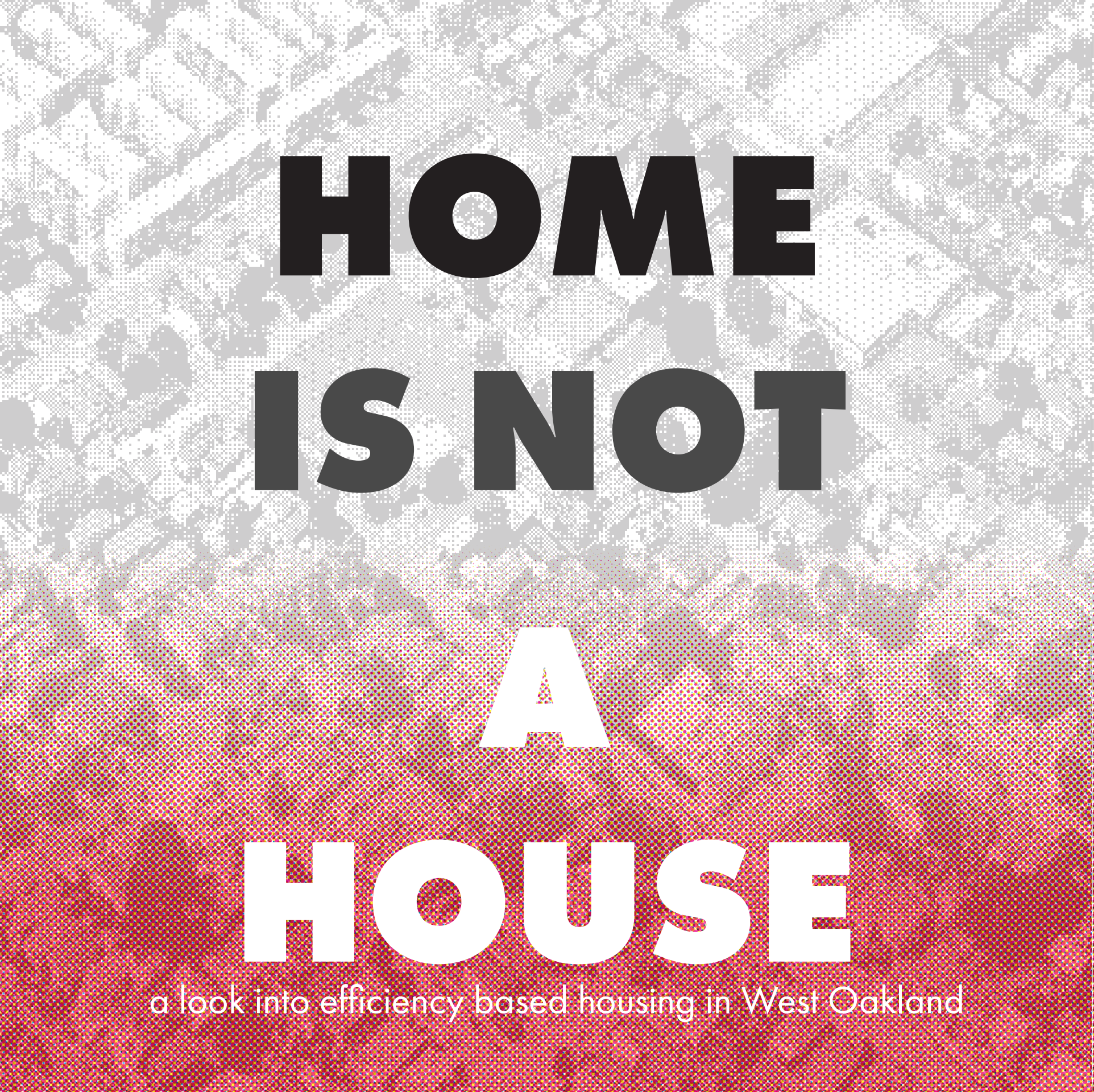
Instructor: Julia Grinkrug

Beyond the scale of a building or interior lies the broader context of the city. As cities around the globe face urgent contemporary challenges, understanding urbanity becomes essential for architectural practice in the 21st century. **Urban Cultures** seminar presents a curated selection of approaches that examine the multifaceted nature of urbanity, building a balanced foundation of theoretical insights and practical skills in urban research.

In Spring 2025 the seminar partnered with **The Prescott Experiment** - a community-led project funded by an Equitable Community Revitalization Grant (ECRG) from the Department of Toxic Substances Controls (DTSC).



Project Booklets



HOME IS NOT A HOUSE

a look into efficiency based housing in West Oakland

WHO GETS TO LIVE HERE?

In West Oakland, historic segregation was enforced through redlining, racially restrictive covenants, and discriminatory lending practices.

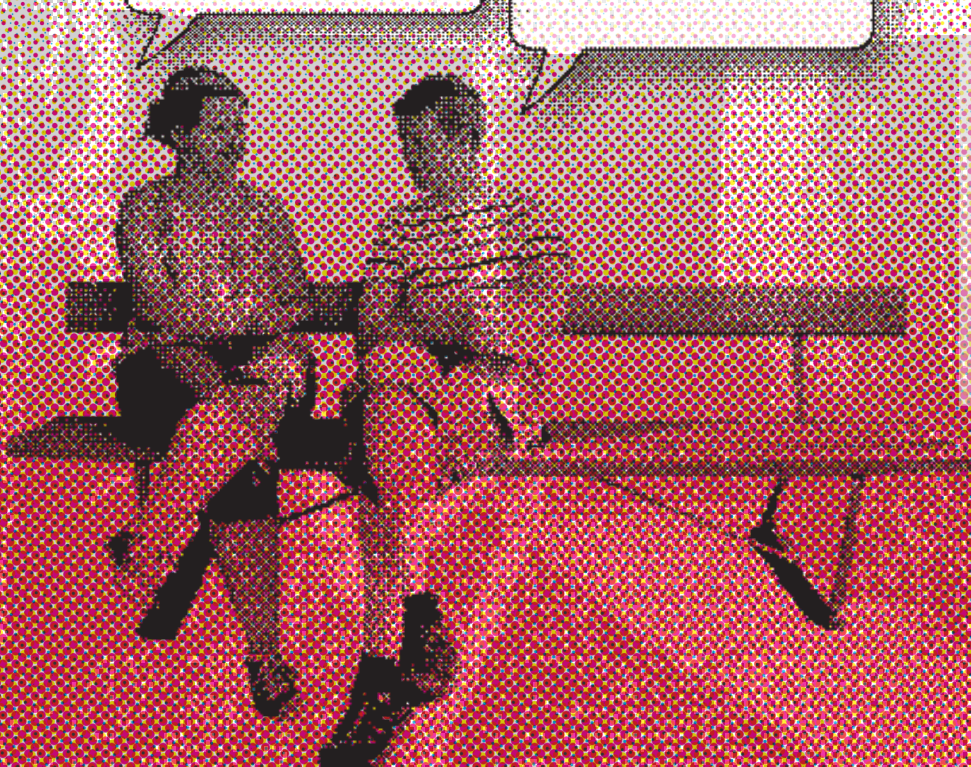
These measures confined residents to certain neighborhoods and denied them access to homeownership and investment opportunities. As a result, poverty became concentrated, preventing many from building generational wealth through property, despite the formation of vibrant and self-sufficient communities. Over time, disinvestment and urban renewal further displaced residents, paving the way for today's gentrification and rising housing costs.

"I moved here for the transit and the community, but I didn't realize my rent meant someone else had to leave."

"My grandparents bought this house when no one else would lend to them—now the city calls it 'up-and-coming' and wants us out."

"Oakland's overlapping crises of housing affordability and homelessness have been intensifying for years now and there don't seem to be any solutions within sight. The city's average home price brushed up against \$1 million this year, putting ownership out of reach for most residents."

oaklandside.org 2022



WHO GETS TO CALL WEST OAKLAND HOME?

WHO BENIFITS FROM REDEVELOPMENT?

COMMUNITY

WELCOME TO WEST OAKLAND

WHO GETS TO OWN PROPERTY?



1852 Foundation of Oakland
 1869 Transcontinental Railroad allows for mass migration to bay area
 1910 West Oakland begins to emerge as a hub for Black residents, but restrictive zoning laws and racially restrictive covenants confine them to specific neighborhoods
 1917 Home Owners' Loan Corporation (HOLC) creates a redlining map for Oakland
 1930s Increase in residential development in West Oakland
 1940s Construction of freeways and urban renewal projects displace many low-income families in West Oakland
 1970s California's Proposition 13 limits property tax increases, leading to reduced public funding for services in predominantly Black neighborhoods
 2000 Oakland experiences a loss of approximately 43,777 Black residents, equivalent to 1/3 of its Black population due to rising housing costs
 2014 Oakland's current homeless population is now over 1,500 people and rising, housing costs continue to rise forcing more to leave and on the streets



WHO BENEFITS FROM DEVELOPEMENT?



The single family home in West Oakland, often a Victorian or craftsman, has long offered stability, outdoor space, and multigenerational living rooted in community identity. New dense housing developments, whether market rate or affordable, aim to address housing shortages by adding more units near transit and jobs. While efficient, they often lack the cultural depth and social ties of older homes. Single family zoning limits density, but unchecked development can drive displacement. As West Oakland changes, the question remains: who is this new housing really for?

"My building has fifty units and I barely know my neighbors, but it's the only place near BART I could afford."

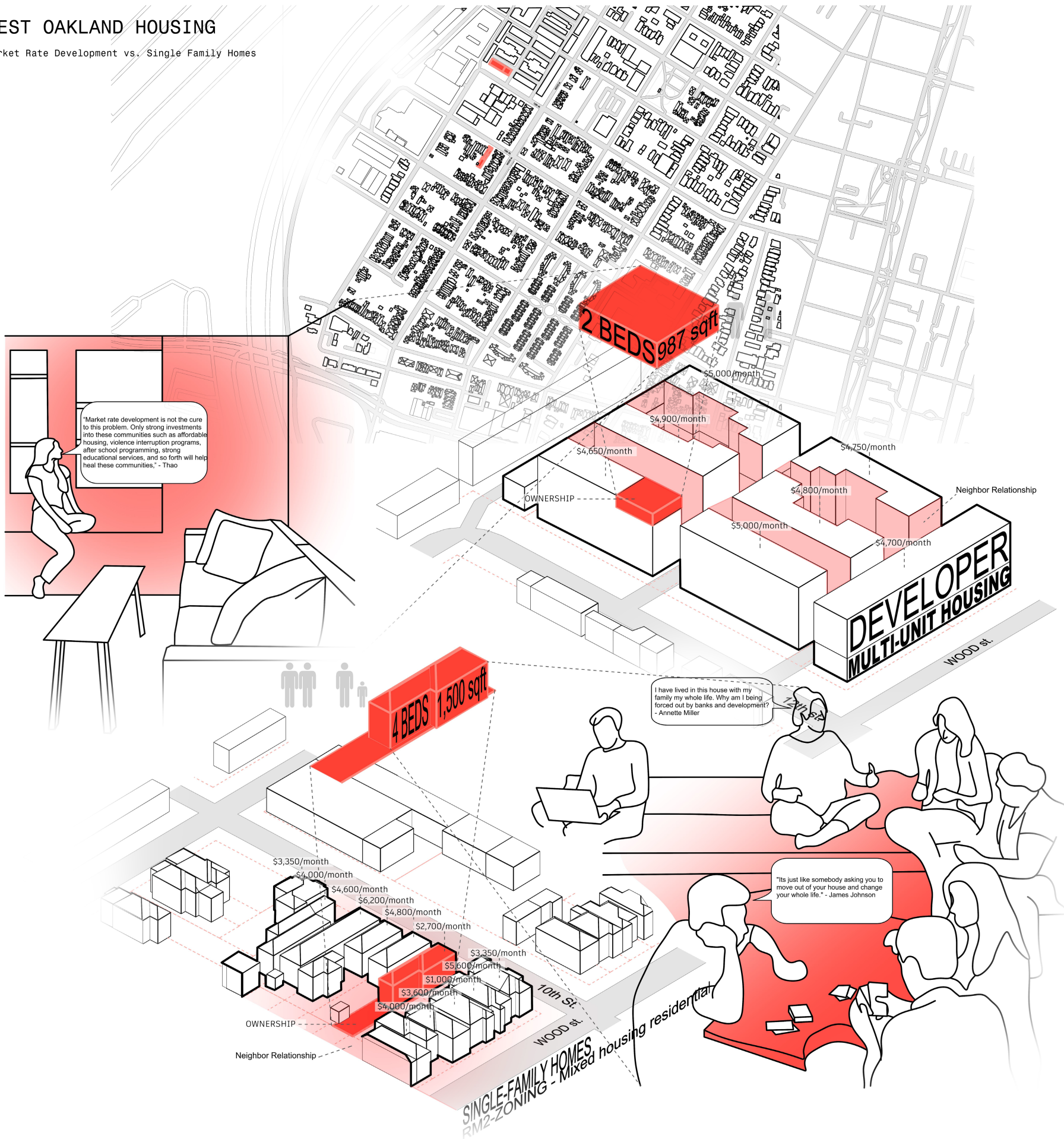
"Growing up in our old house, everyone on the block knew each other—we shared tools, food, and stories."



Background Image: Black Panther Affordable Housing along 7th Street

WEST OAKLAND HOUSING

Market Rate Development vs. Single Family Homes



WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

Transit-oriented developments are designed to bring housing closer to transit hubs like BART, promising easier access to jobs, services, and the broader city. But in practice, these developments often cater to higher-income residents, pricing out those who transit was originally meant to serve. As

land near stations becomes more valuable, longtime communities are pushed further out, losing both homes and connectivity. If transit is supposed to equalize access, why does it so often end up reinforcing inequality? Where does development go from here—and who gets to decide?

"When I was a kid, we could hop on the bus or the old AC line and get anywhere—we didn't need a car."

"Now I live near BART, but the rent eats half my paycheck. The train's fast, but what's the point if you're priced out of the city it connects you to?"

"Proximity to BART stations can be a significant factor in determining home and rental prices in Oakland, with properties close to these stations often commanding a premium due to the convenience and accessibility they offer."

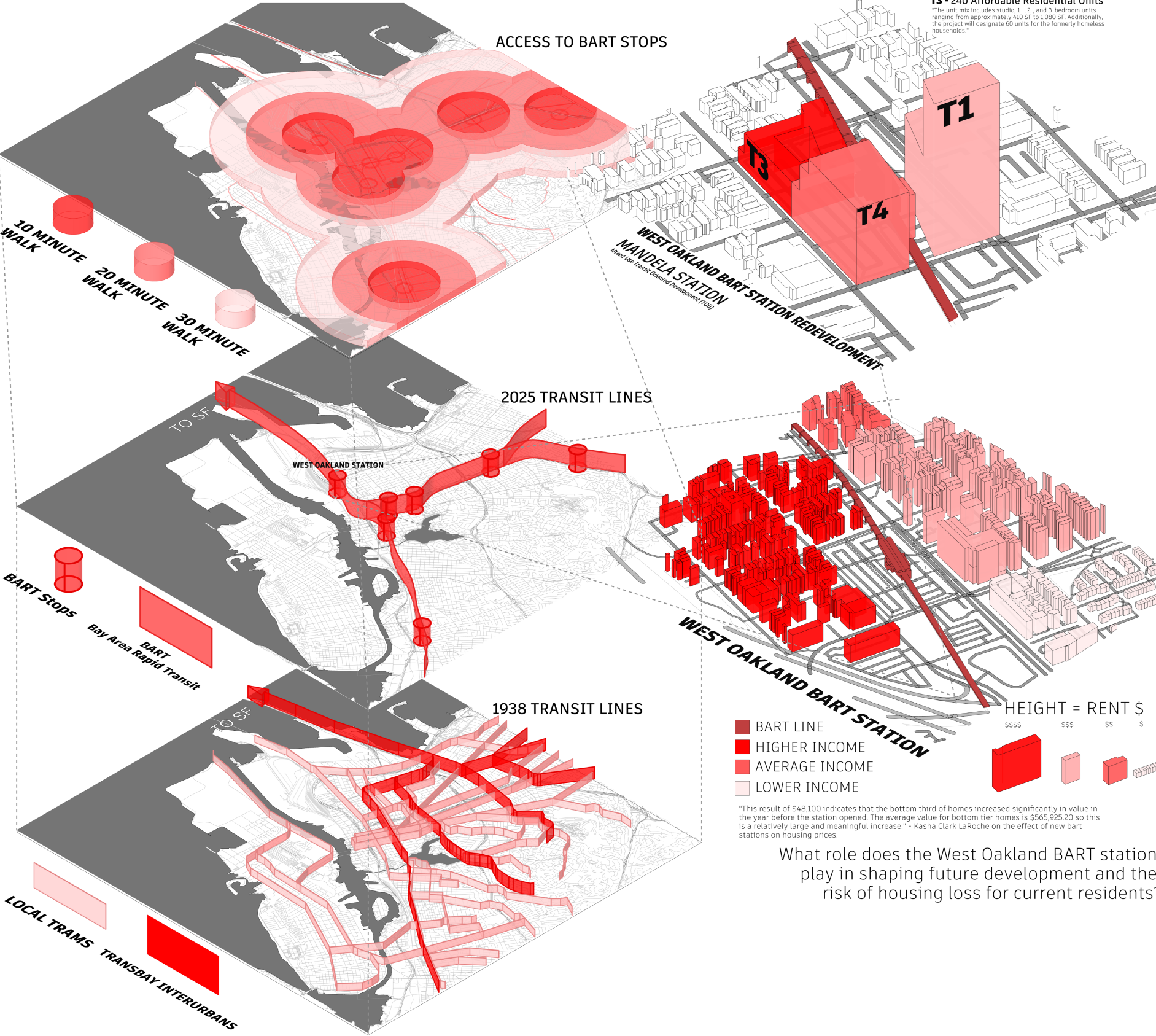
doorstead.com 2024

Background Image: Proposed Plan for Mandela Station along 7th Street

MAPPING THE COST OF CONNECTION

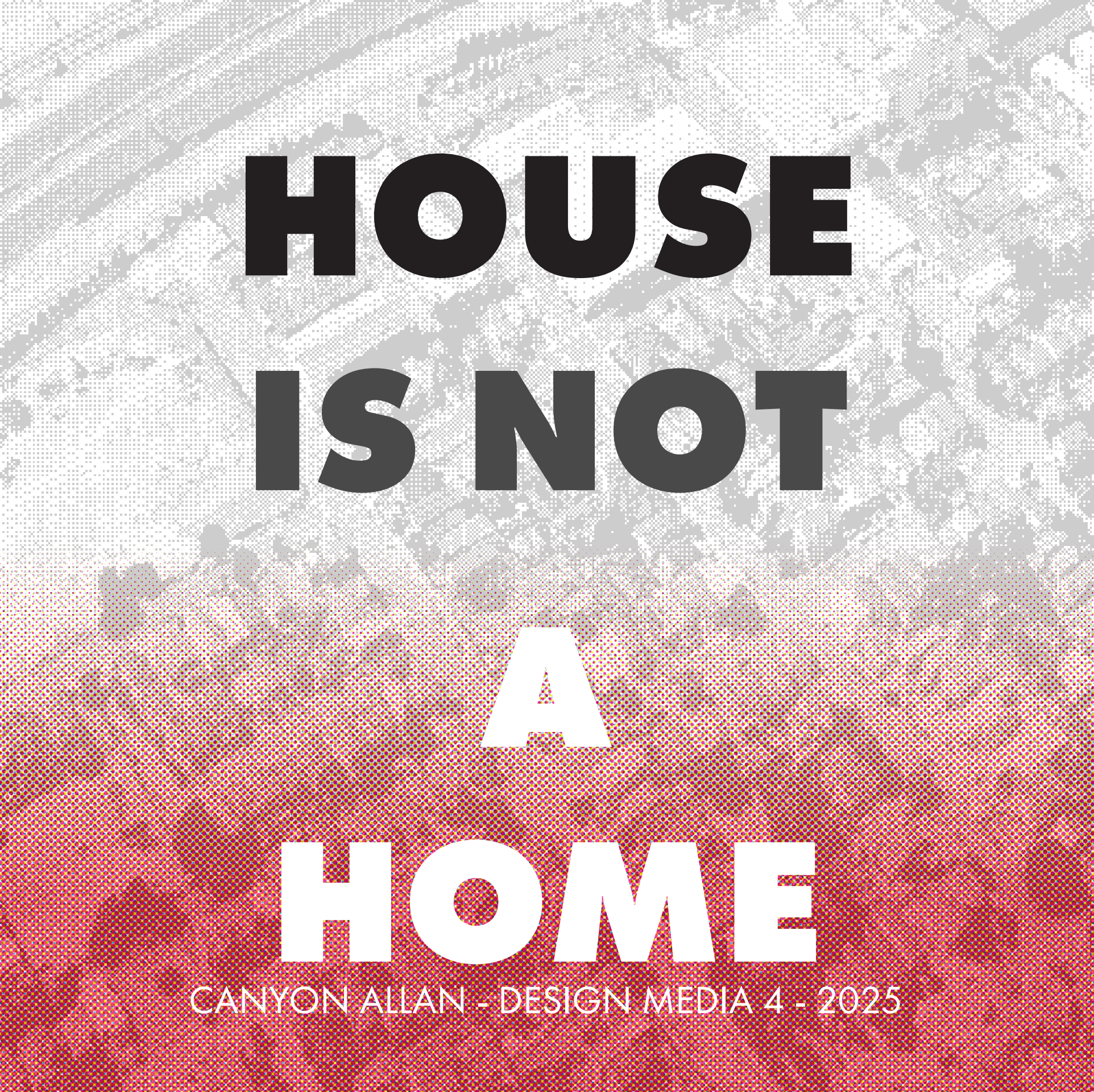
How does being near transit affect who can afford to live in Oakland – and who gets pushed out?

Proposed Plan
T1 - 552 Market Rate/High End Residential Units
T4 - 300k sqft. Office/Education
T3 - 240 Affordable Residential Units
The unit mix includes studio, 1-, 2-, and 3-bedroom units ranging from approximately 400 SF to 1,080 SF. Additionally, the project will designate 60 units for the formerly homeless households.



"This result of \$48,100 indicates that the bottom third of homes increased significantly in value in the year before the station opened. The average value for bottom tier homes is \$565,925.20 so this is a relatively large and meaningful increase." - Kasha Clark LaRoche on the effect of new bart stations on housing prices.

What role does the West Oakland BART station play in shaping future development and the risk of housing loss for current residents?



HOUSE

IS NOT

A

HOME

CANYON ALLAN - DESIGN MEDIA 4 - 2025



**Where Do Things
Grow?**

**Gardening Through
Rupture in West
Oakland**

Infrastructure, Land Use, and Urban Agriculture in West Oakland

West Oakland has long been shaped by transportation systems, industrial growth, and patterns of migration. While community gardens, informal markets, and urban farms have provided access to fresh food and local resilience, larger forces—such as redlining, freeway construction, and industrial zoning—have continuously reshaped access to land. These changes fractured neighborhoods, displaced families, and left behind soil contamination and disinvestment.

This project traces the intersection of infrastructure and food systems across time. What once included backyards, orchards, and shared plots has become a patchwork of vacant lots, food deserts, and fenced-off parcels. Still, urban gardens remain. Beyond growing food, they hold space for cultural memory, ecological repair, and intergenerational knowledge.

Through mapping, historical research, and spatial observation, this work documents how West Oakland's land has been lost and reclaimed—highlighting the role of gardens not as romantic gestures, but as practical, grounded responses to structural neglect.

What do we inherit when our soil is paved over?

Forces of Change

Tracing the Shifts in West Oakland's Landscape

1852

West Oakland is established

1869

The Transcontinental Railroad is completed

1870s-1880

Agricultural trade expands through new rail systems

1890s

African American communities grow in West Oakland.

1910s-1930

The Great Migration brings thousands of African Americans to West Oakland

1920s-1930

The Great Migration reshapes the neighborhood

1940s

Wartime industry fuels economic growth

1957

The Cypress Freeway cuts through the community

1966

The Black Panther Party is born

1989

The Loma Prieta Earthquake brings down the freeway

1990-2020

Gentrification transforms the landscape





Urban Gardens as Formal and Informal Practice

Urban gardens in West Oakland operate on two planes—one visible to policy, the other rooted in lived experience. This project mapped how gardens exist both within and beyond zoning logic, often defying formal classifications to meet everyday needs. In a neighborhood fractured by industrial expansion and housing displacement, gardens reclaim backyards, sidewalks, and vacant lots as systems of care.

At one site, zoning technically permits small-scale gardening—yet what actually takes root reveals more. Residents share tools, raise goats, compost food scraps, and host cultural events. These are not just food-growing spaces but informal infrastructures built by and for the community. They form networks of survival where public systems fall short.

Does the city support its gardeners, or simply tolerate them?



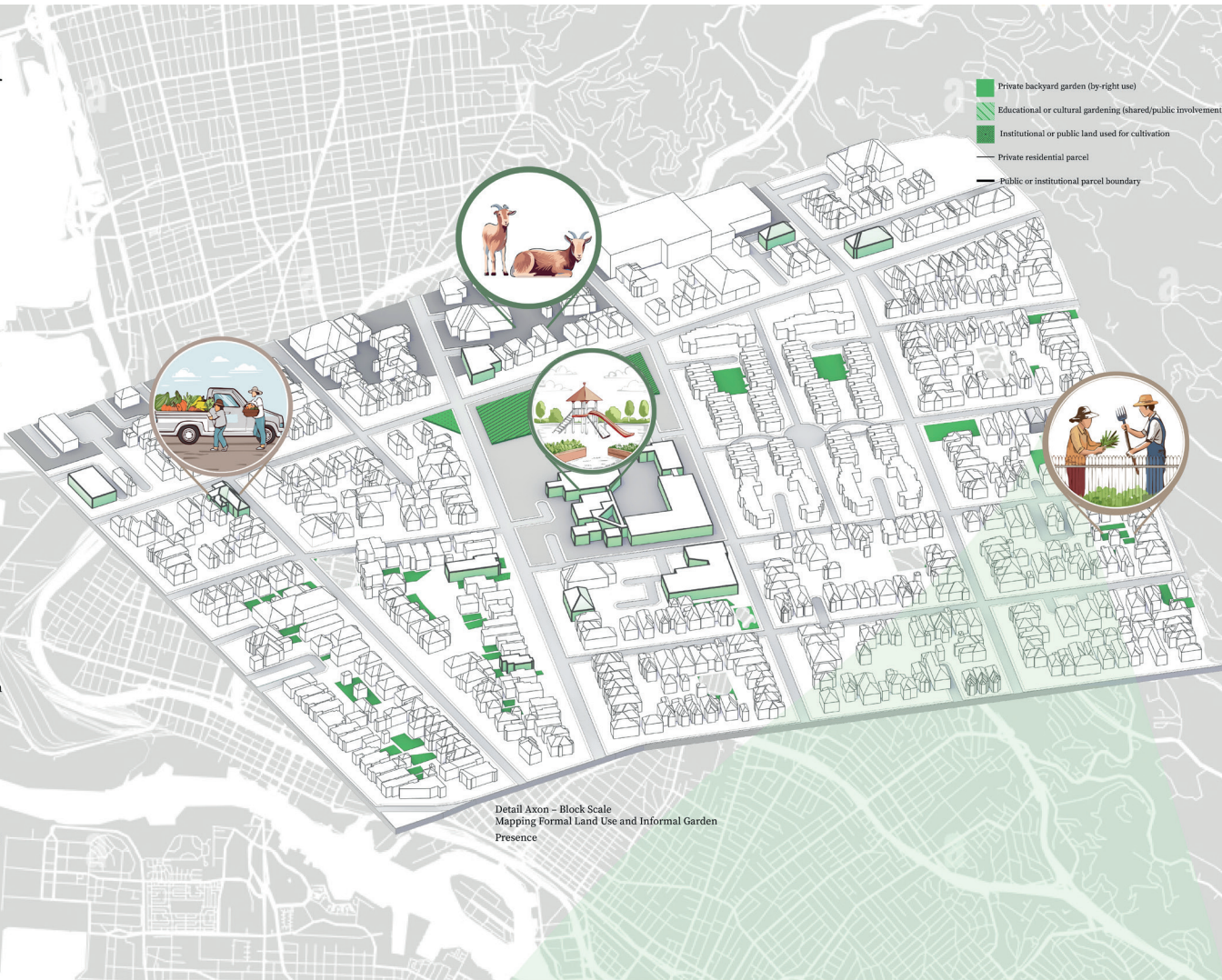
Where does formal zoning end and mutual aid begin?

Urban Gardens as Formal and Informal Protocols

The Spatial Life of Urban Gardens in West Oakland

This drawing maps the presence and function of urban gardens in West Oakland, revealing how they operate as both formal infrastructure and informal community lifelines. By documenting public and private growing spaces, this research highlights how urban gardening intersects with food access, land use, and collective care. These gardens represent more than green space—they are nodes of resilience that challenge displacement and provide space for cultural gathering, teaching, and mutual aid.

Formally, most of the observed gardens fall under Oakland's "limited agriculture" zoning classification, which permits residential-scale food growing by right in zones like RM (residential multi-family) and RD (residential duplex). Within the Prescott neighborhood, these zones dominate, allowing for vegetable beds, composting, and even small-scale animal keeping—such as chickens and goats—under specific setback and health requirements. However, while zoning technically allows for these practices, their actual emergence depends on factors like parcel ownership, community initiative, and historical land use patterns. The drawing highlights this tension by mapping the overlays of zoning envelopes, property lines, and access types, revealing where formal allowances support informal action—and where



Community-Led Gardening Practices in West Oakland



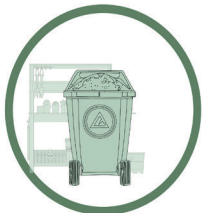
1. Harvesting



2. Mutual aid / tool sharing



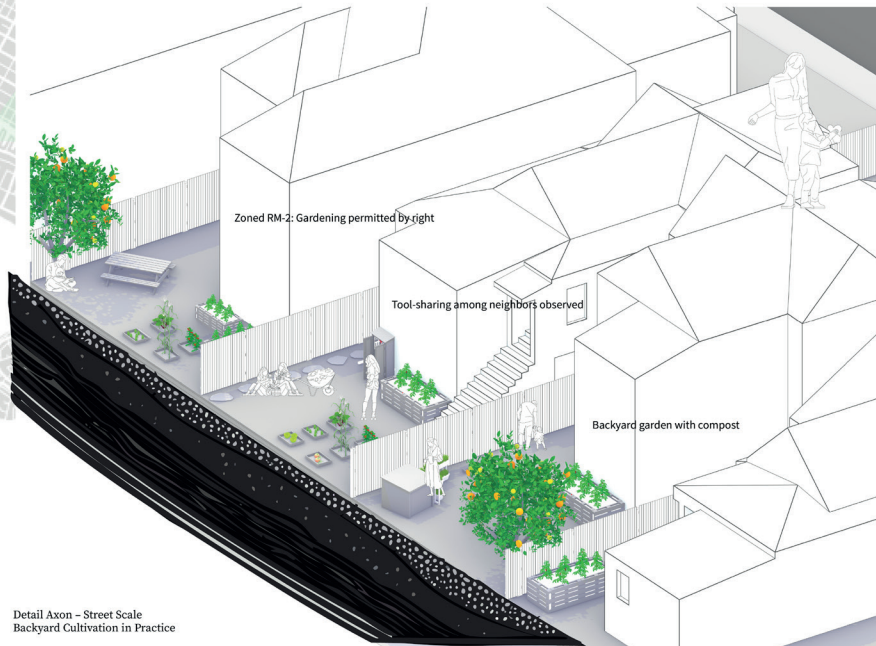
3. Cultural gathering



4. Composting



5. Informal teaching



Water Systems and the Informal Infrastructures of Survival

The water that reaches West Oakland originates over 90 miles away in the Sierra Nevada and is delivered via the Mokelumne Aqueduct, managed by EBMUD. Despite this regional network, water infrastructure within the neighborhood remains unreliable. Aging sewer systems, sealed creeks, and rising groundwater compromise water access and management at the local level. Project 3 maps this fragmented journey—tracing water from its source to its points of rupture and loss in West Oakland's residential fabric.

In response to these failures, residents implement informal and decentralized strategies. Rain barrels, drip irrigation, greywater reuse, and raised beds built above contaminated or flood-prone soil reflect a localized form of environmental adaptation. These methods are not merely provisional—they constitute a form of infrastructural agency, shaped by necessity and supported through shared knowledge.

How do communities reclaim land when the soil itself is unsafe?

What forms of stewardship emerge in spaces marked by toxicity?



Where Does the Water Go?

Tracing Oakland's water networks from mountain to garden.

The water that reaches West Oakland doesn't begin nearby. It travels nearly 100 miles from the Sierra Nevada, flows through the Mokelumne River, crosses the Delta, and is carried westward by a vast aqueduct system managed by EBMUD. But by the time it arrives, it's no longer a clean, direct journey — it's fragmented, leaking, rising from the ground, and often unreachable to those who need it most.

This project maps the journey of water across three interconnected scales: from the regional systems that bring water in, to the broken and buried networks that lose it along the way, to the neighborhood-level questions of how water is accessed, reused, or wasted.

In West Oakland, the problem isn't just scarcity — it's contamination, aging infrastructure, rising groundwater, and a long history of environmental neglect. What happens to the water that doesn't make it to the tap? How do residents irrigate their gardens, manage polluted soil, or access rain and greywater alternatives?

Scale 1 – Regional Watershed Flow

From the Mokelumne River to the East Bay

Water for West Oakland begins over 90 miles away in the Sierra Nevada foothills. It travels through the Mokelumne Aqueduct and across the Delta before entering the East Bay. The EBMUD system supplies this urban area, yet the journey of water doesn't end at the tap.

WEST OAKLAND HAS OVER 200 BROWNFIELD SITES AND IS PART OF THE EPA'S ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE SCREENING TOOL DUE TO HIGH CUMULATIVE EXPOSURE RISKS.

RESIDENTS FACE ELEVATED LEVELS OF DIESEL PARTICULATE MATTER—UP TO 90 TIMES HIGHER THAN STATE AVERAGES,

Container Gardens

Reuses buckets and barrels to grow food in non-arable land.



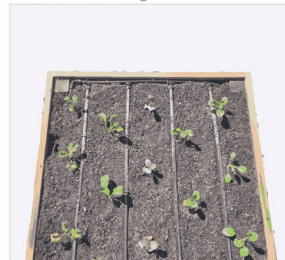
Rain Barrel System

Collects rooftop runoff for reuse in gardens.



Drip Irrigation

Reduces water use through efficient slow-release watering.



Raised Garden Beds

Prevents contact with contaminated soil by using clean fill.



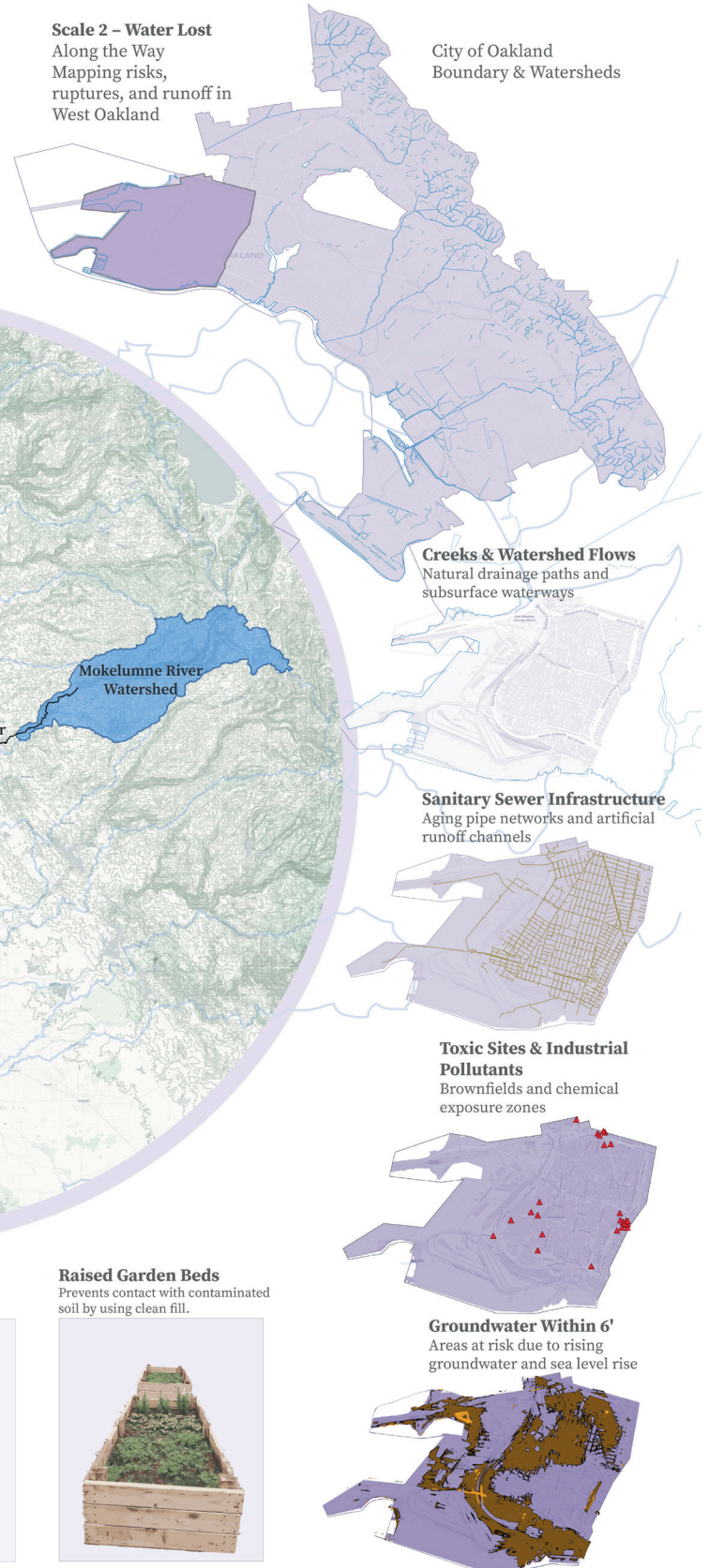
43% OF WEST OAKLAND RESIDENTS LIVE WITHIN 6' OF RISING GROUNDWATER

8 MILES OF CREEKS SEALED UNDER CONCRETE

90+ MILES OF WATER TRAVEL FROM SIERRA TO EAST BAY

Scale 2 – Water Lost Along the Way
Mapping risks, ruptures, and runoff in West Oakland

City of Oakland
Boundary & Watersheds





Sofía Garcia

I'm a B.Arch student at California College of the Arts who cares deeply about ecology, art, and how environmental systems shape daily life. My work explores how everyday practices, like gardening, can help people care for each other, resist environmental harm, and reconnect with land in meaningful ways.

Spring 2025
Design Media Seminar:
Urban Cultures
Bachelor of Architecture
California College of the
Arts, San Francisco
Instructor: Julia Grinkrug



ALLOW YOUR COMMUNITY TO TELL THEIR OWN STORY

People have been telling West Oakland's story a lot over the past decade, but it's almost never from the perspective of those who actually grew up here. Just like with redevelopment, the decisions—and the stories—keep getting made without really listening to what the community has been saying all along.



ALLOW YOUR
COMMUNITY TO
TELL THEIR
OWN STORY!

← MURAL IN PROGRESS →

West Oakland
Mural Project

1999
The Creative arts
and education
centre opens, Urban
Relief is founded

West Oakland link
for safe
bikable streets

Customisation
of the streets

1966
Huey P. Newton and
Bobby Seale founded
the Black Panther
Party for
Self-Defense

1957
BART displaced many Black residents, cutting
the neighbourhood off from downtown. The
decline of seventh street.

Port Of
Oakland
Chester
P. Howard
Terminal

West Oakland
Walks project

R.R. EXCHANGE HOTEL

BLACK
OWNED
SOUL FOOD

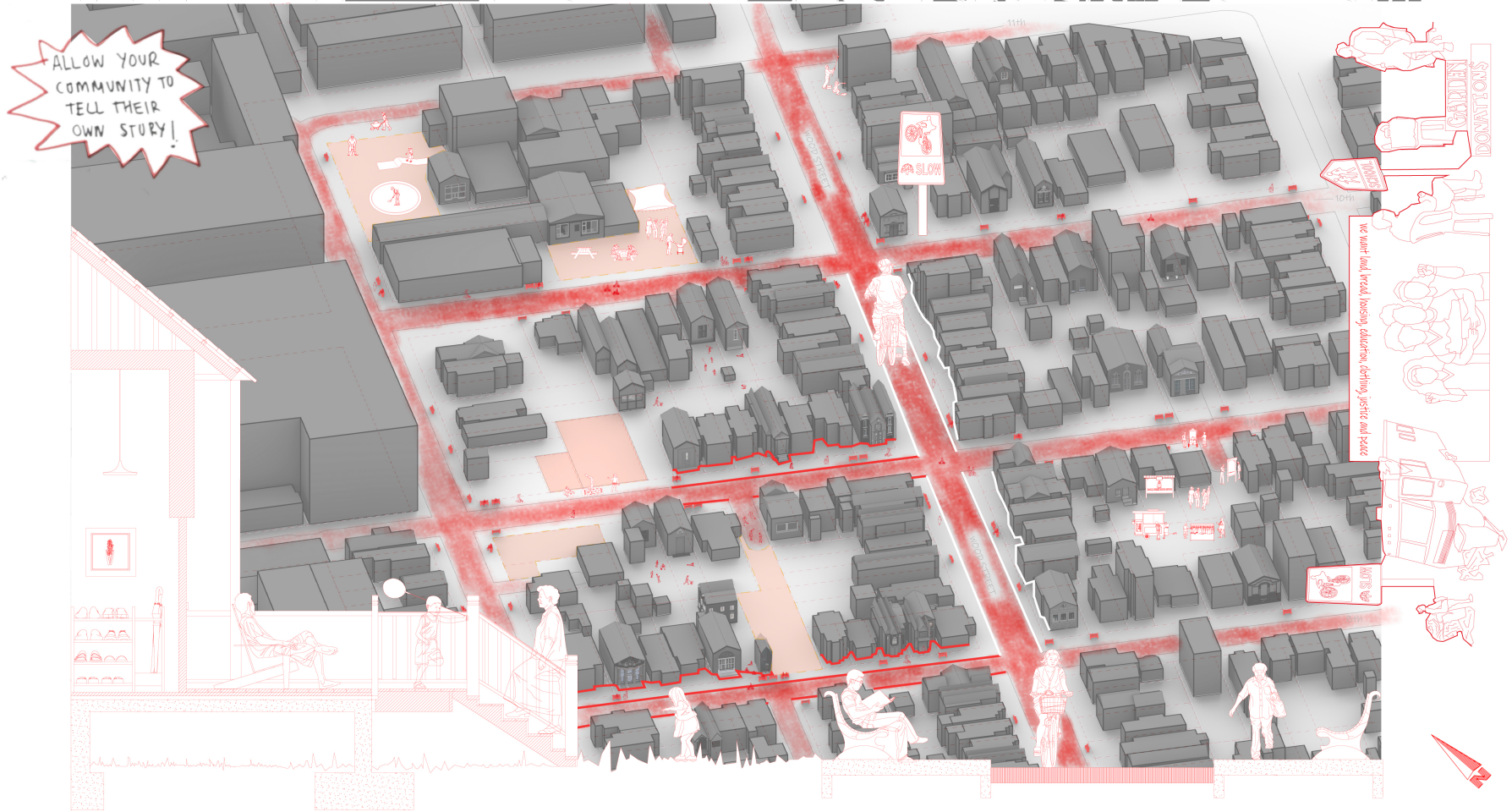
I AM AN AMERICAN

WHERE AND WHAT HAPPENS IN THE GAP BETWEEN COMMUNITY NEEDS AND INSTITUTIONAL PROTOCOLS

Institutions have established designated spaces intended for community gathering and mutual resource exchange.

However, when these spaces prove inaccessible, insufficient, or unsafe, communities respond by mobilizing collectively, blurring the boundaries between public and private spaces and adapting formal protocols to meet their own needs.

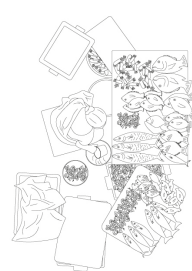
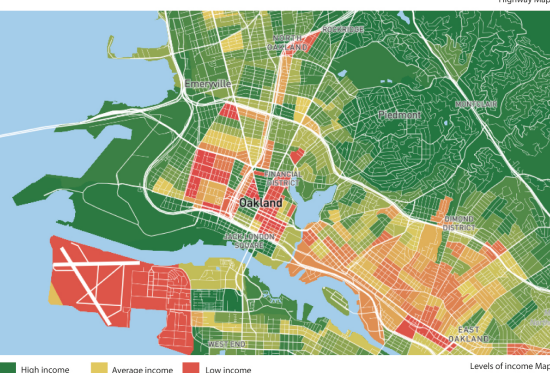




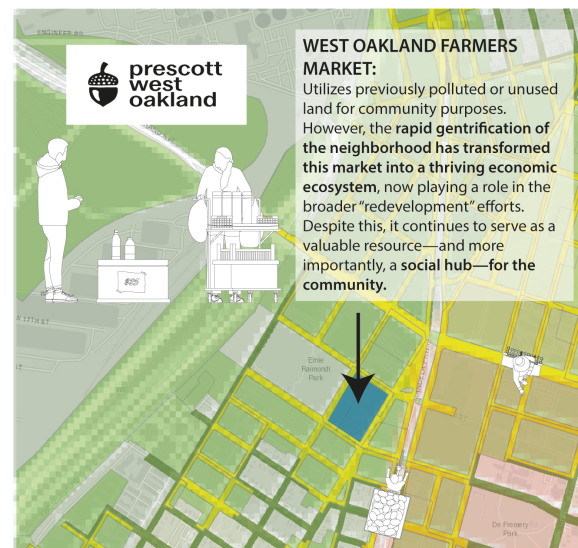


How can we create a space for local exchange that centers community benefit, safety, and accessibility through the simultaneous collaboration of grassroots initiatives and institutional frameworks?

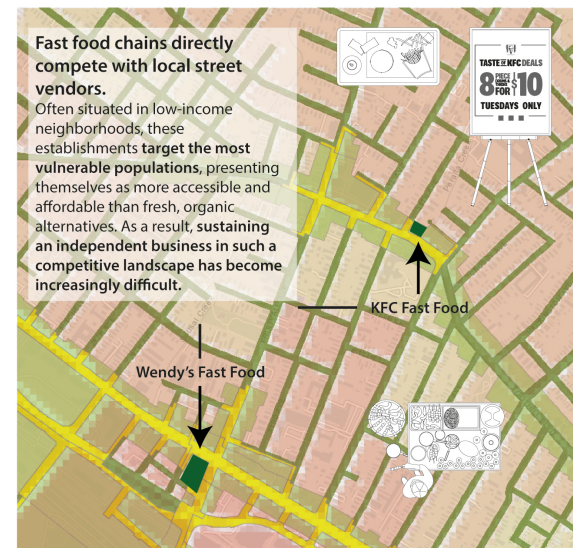




Why should communities advocate for street vendors over institutional fast food chains in low-income neighborhoods?

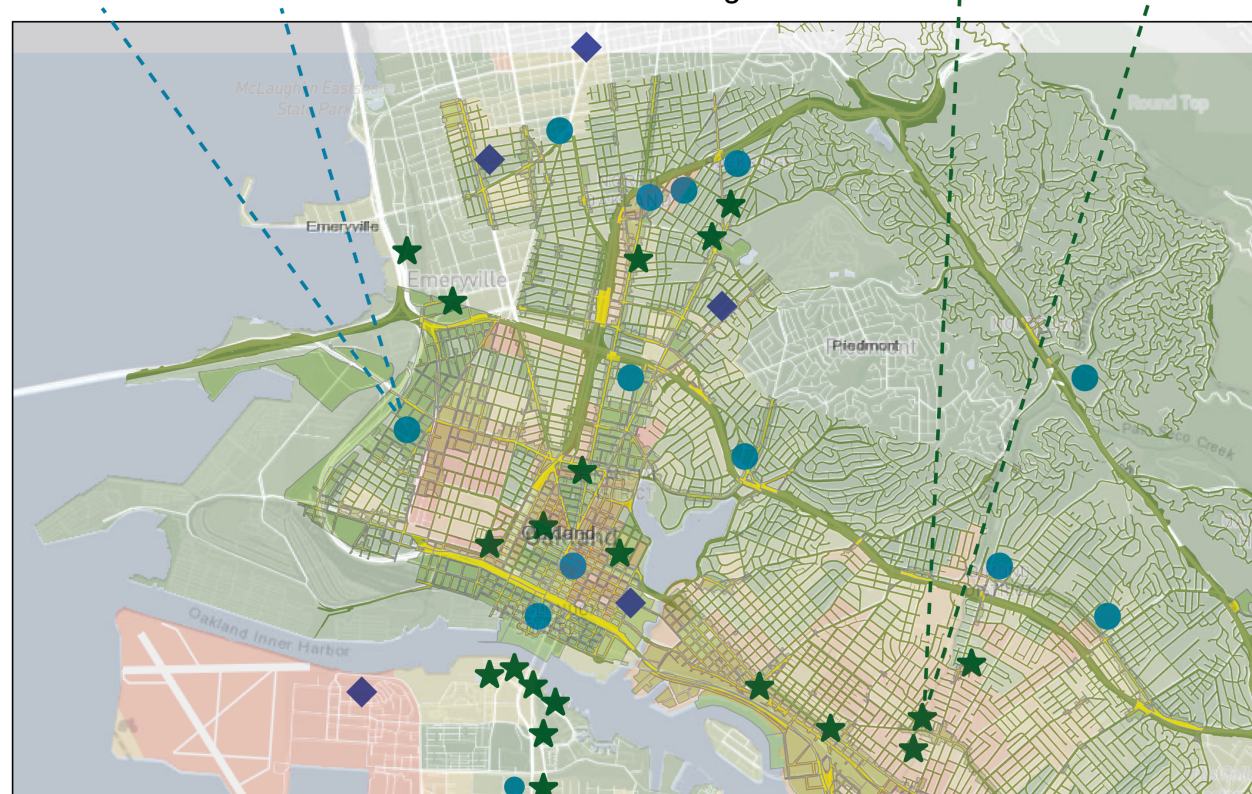


WEST OAKLAND FARMERS MARKET



KFC & FAST FOOD AREA

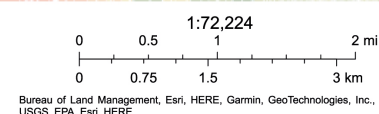
Mobile Vending



April 14, 2025

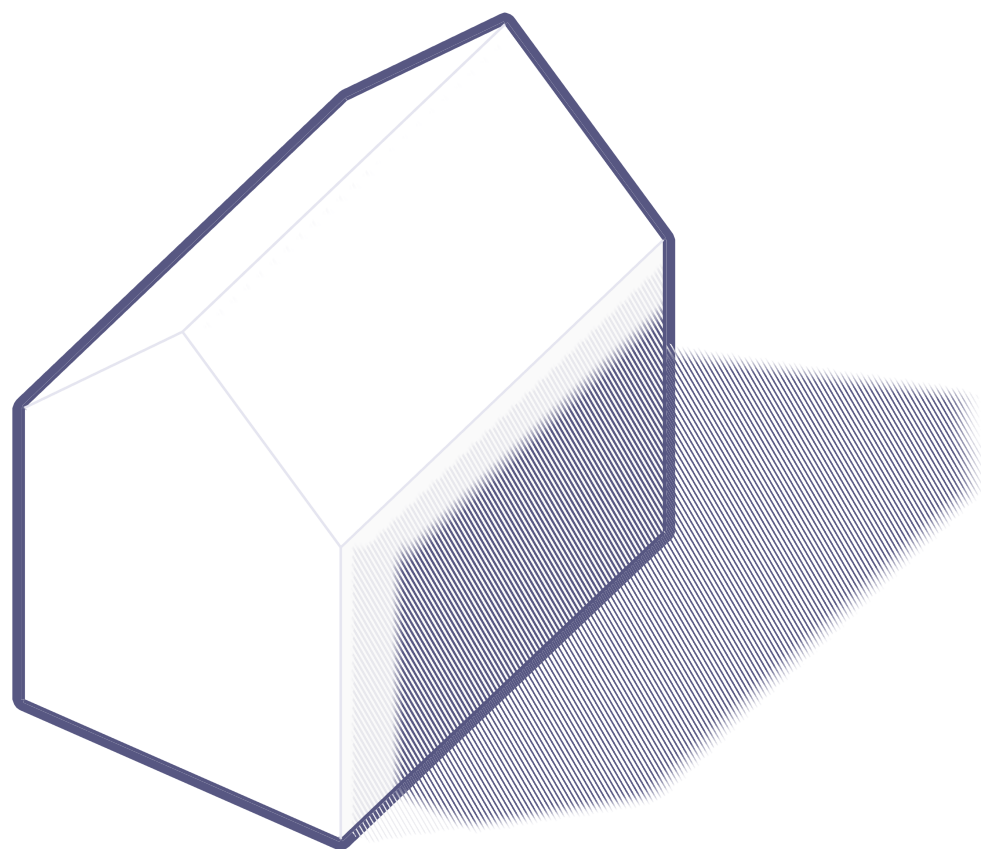
- Permitted Vending Area for Trucks, Trailers, and Stationary Vendors
- Permitted Vending Area- For All Sidewalk Roaming Vendors
- All Vendors- Permittable Vending Area on Private Property

- Flea Markets
- Farmers Markets
- Fast Food Chains





MOVING



DISPARITY OVER GENERATIONS HAUNTS THE NEIGHBORHOOD.

Q: WHAT HAPPENED HERE?

Prescott, also known as the Lower Bottoms, used to be a home to a variety of communities. Being situated near the waterfront, it used to house the workers employed by shipyards and factories of the east bay. Also, it was once the haven of Blues music in the Bay Area. However, as the demand for shipbuilding withered and through constant discrimination towards this neighborhood of working class ethnic communities, the population of the neighborhood declined. Eventually, as the construction of the overpass over the 7th street, a home to west coast blues, came to a completion, it marked the end of an era of once vibrant neighborhood.





FINAL NOTICE OF EVICTION
Court Order No. CO2-14
Address 100 WEST STREET 71ST
NORTH COUNTY SHERIFF'S
SHERIFF SCHWARTZ

MARCH FOR JOBS
DURHAM, N.C. - JUNE 3, 1968
PARADE STARTS AT 1:00 PM
PROT. A.M.E. CHURCH
"CANTONAL" BUS & CLOTHING
JOB SUNDAY
PARADE AND RALLY
RALLY AT LAKESIDE DRIVE
LAKESIDE DRIVE
TRANSIT-BART

Construction of BART and Interstate Freeway

Photos from the heydays of Harlem of the west

RAUL FOOD

Moore Dry Dock

Slim Jenkins' Night Club

"SLIM" JENKINS' BLUE ROOM

Pipe City

Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters

La Estrella

Oakland Long Wharf (Terminal)

1869
The end Terminal for Central Pacific line of the first transcontinental railroad was completed.

1930
West Oakland became predominantly African American neighborhood (200,000 residents) with many thriving businesses such as jazz and blues clubs.

During Great Depression, many of the locals loses their homes and form a temporary housing using surplus sewer pipes, called "Pipe City".

Pre-1939
Working class families from diverse backgrounds populated the area and worked at shipyards and railroads.

Many also came from Mexico, fleeing from Mexican revolution. Many others from Puerto Rico, Cuba, and other Central America were also present.

1939-45
Due to labor shortage, many workers were brought in from outside the neighborhood during WW2, mostly from southern states.

Majority of them settled in the lower half of West Oakland, which happens to mark the beginning of segregation.

1940s
West Oakland became the central stage of the West Coast for Blues, attracting many visitors to its diverse music venues.

1950s
West Oakland sees decline in wartime jobs.

Construction of freeway, BART, and urban renewal displaces most of Latinx community and many of African American Community.

High overtly rate increases due to changes in the neighborhood. Multiple community organizations were formed in response.

1960s
Situation worsens with the completion of BART above-ground track, which disturbs the neighborhood relentlessly day and night.

Black Panthers is formed in effort to resist the urban renewal projects harming the neighborhood. West Oakland becomes the central stage for their movement.

THE ABSENTEES: A RISING TIDE OF CORPORATE OWNERSHIP.

Q: WHO LIVES HERE?

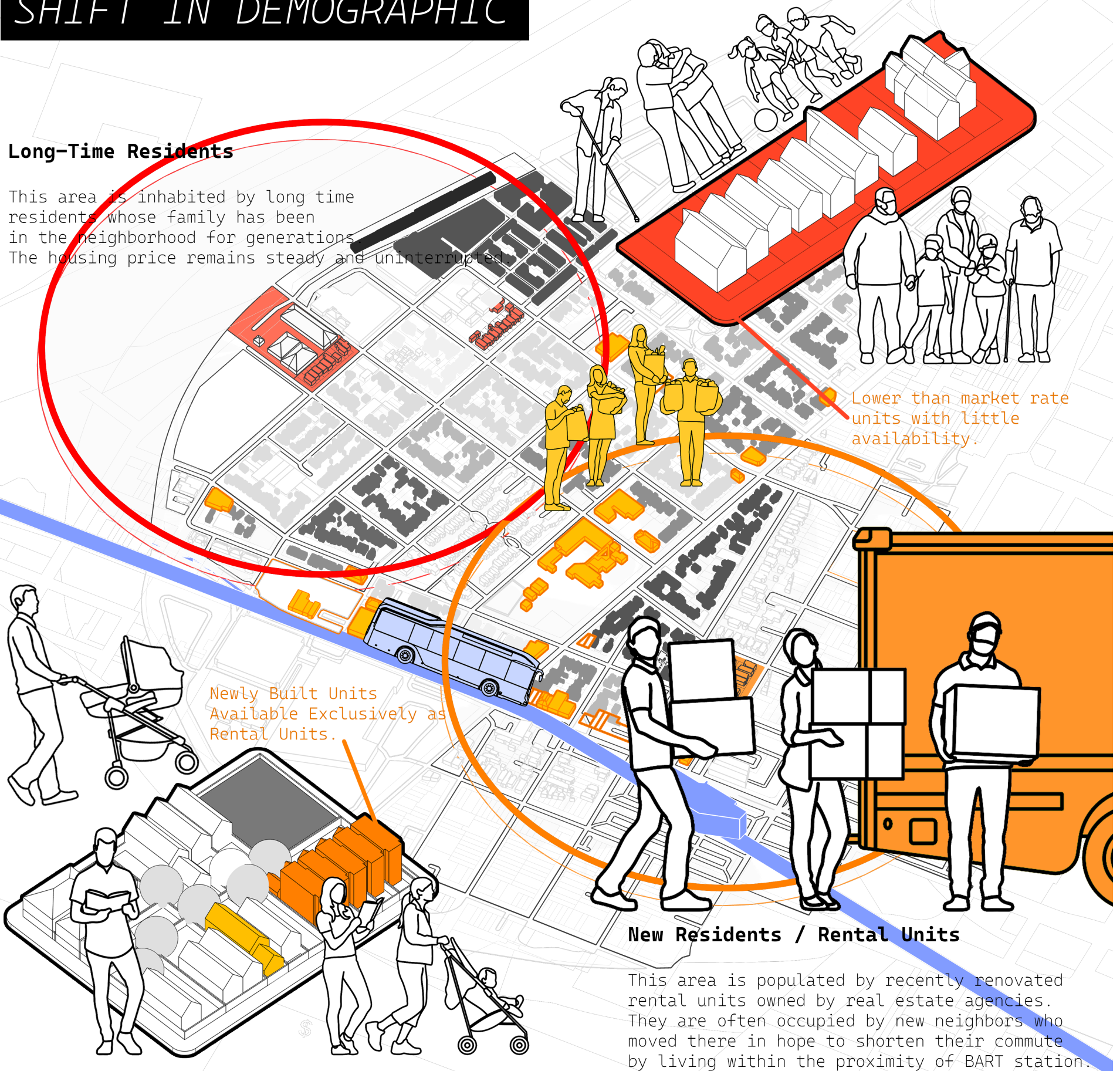
Cities constantly change. Some stay put in the same neighborhood through generations while the majority of the neighborhood acts almost like a revolving door, where people come and go at a short interval. Prescott, being a neighborhood near the station closest to the city on the east bay, became a rather popular place for those seeking to move closer to their workplaces. Naturally, it causes the investors to purchase the houses for rental in hope to make a profit. This displaces the existing neighbors and lowers the individual ownership of the houses, inevitably driving up the average cost of living.



SHIFT IN DEMOGRAPHIC

Long-Time Residents

This area is inhabited by long time residents whose family has been in the neighborhood for generations. The housing price remains steady and uninterrupted.



Lower than market rate units with little availability.

Newly Built Units Available Exclusively as Rental Units.

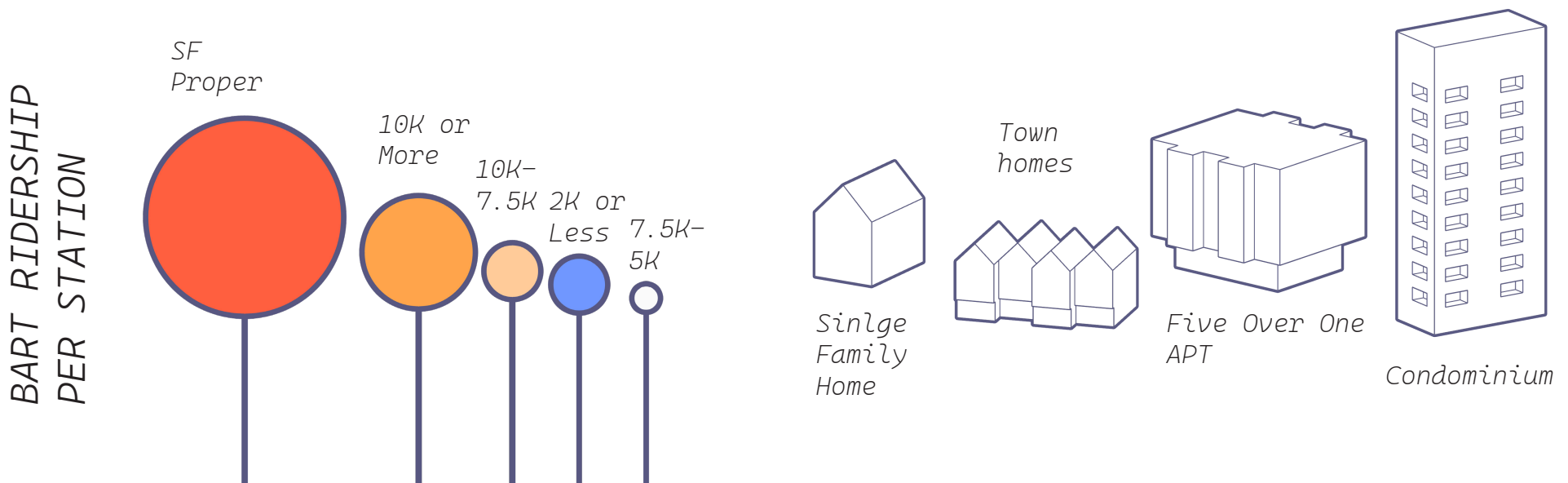
New Residents / Rental Units

This area is populated by recently renovated rental units owned by real estate agencies. They are often occupied by new neighbors who moved there in hope to shorten their commute by living within the proximity of BART station.

THE VEINS OF EXPANSION: SUPPLYING THE POPULATION WITH HOUSING

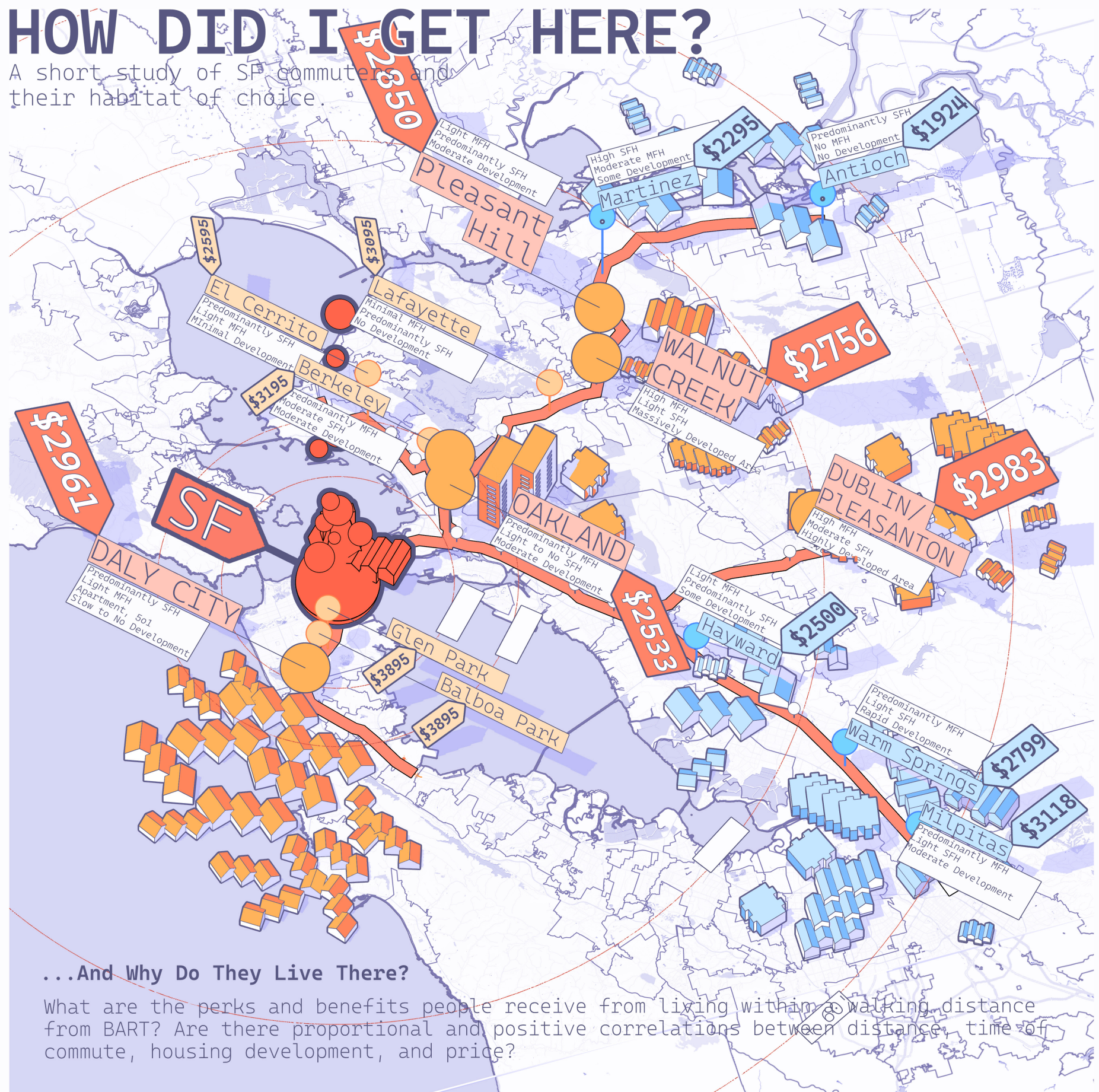
Q: WHERE DOES EVERYONE ELSE LIVE?

In Bay Area, a sizeable portion of the population commutes to downtown San Francisco often via BART. As BART connects 50 different cities and neighborhoods, it provides the commuters with a range of options as to where they can live. The following panel shows the popular places of origin and types of housing commonly found near the stations. In some areas, it contradicts common expectations such as distance positively correlating to housing price, types of housing found near densely populated area commonly being multi family units, or less popular stations of origin being sparsely populated.



HOW DID I GET HERE?

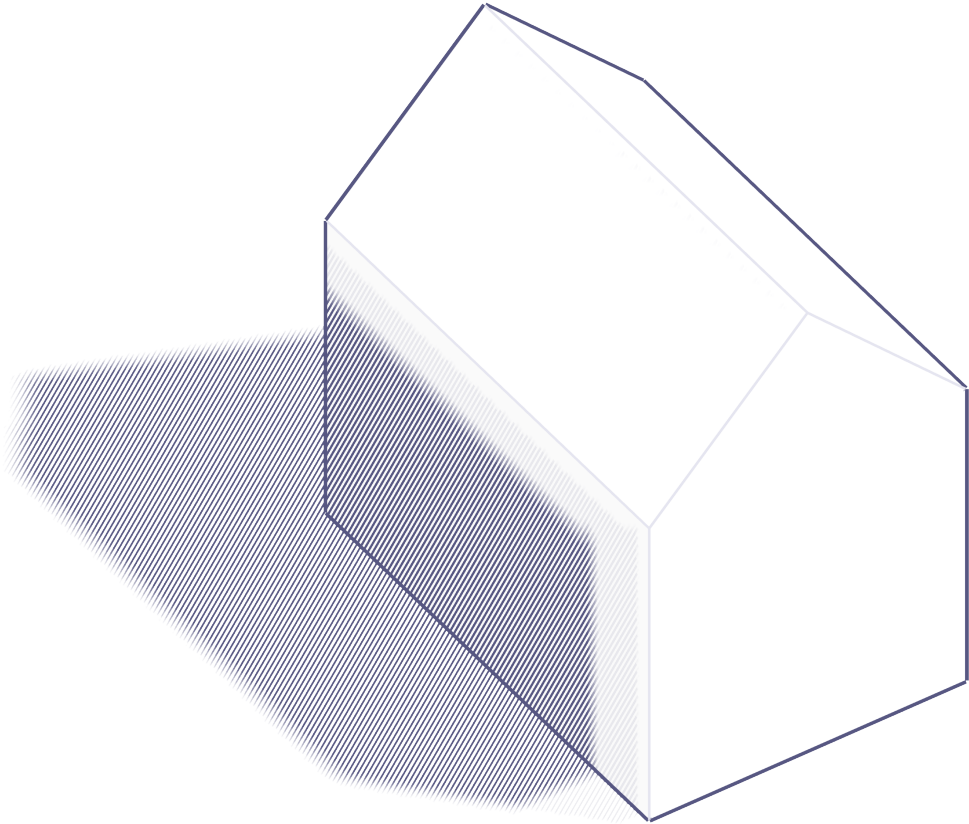
A short study of SF commuters and their habitat of choice.

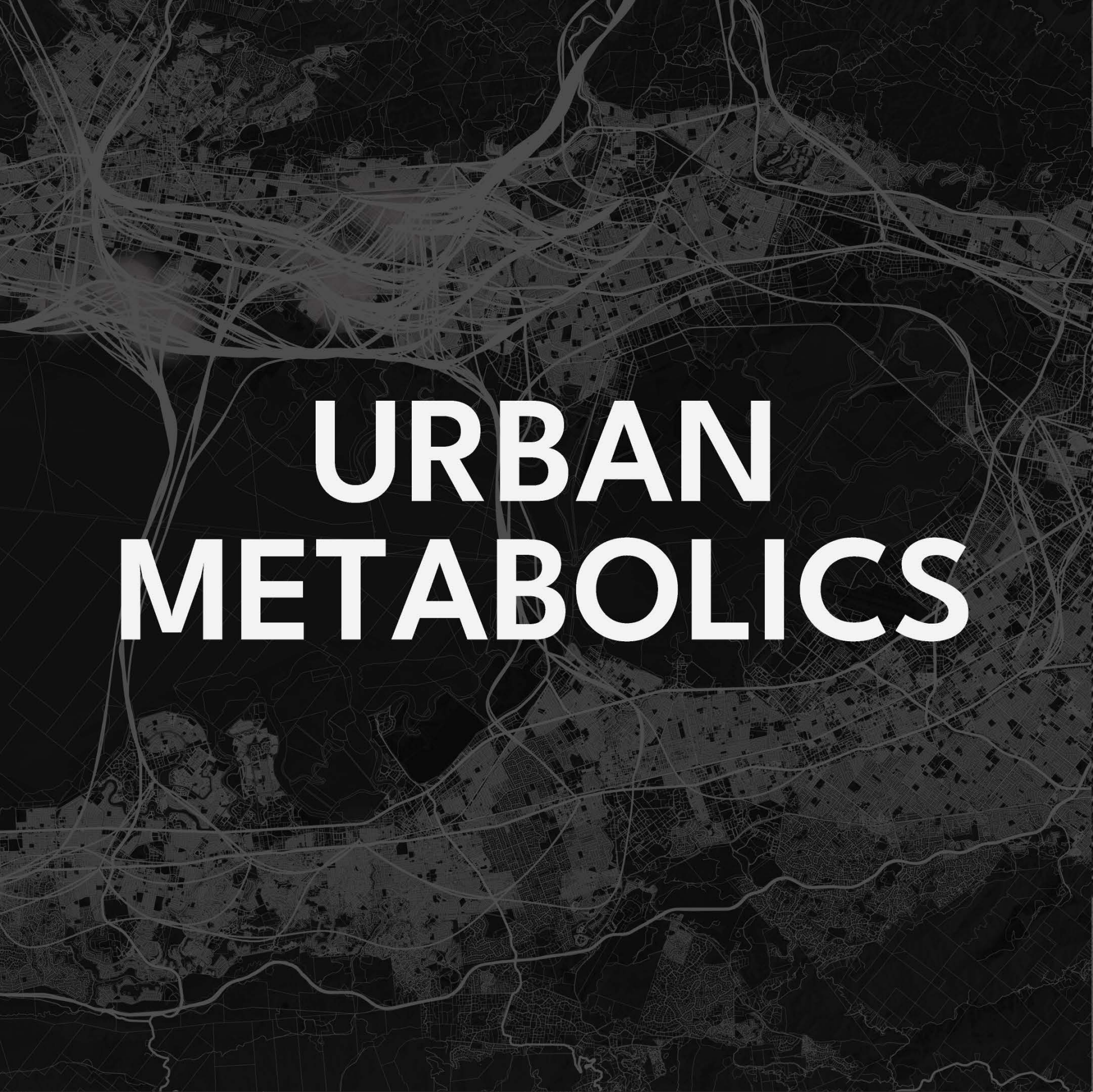


...And Why Do They Live There?

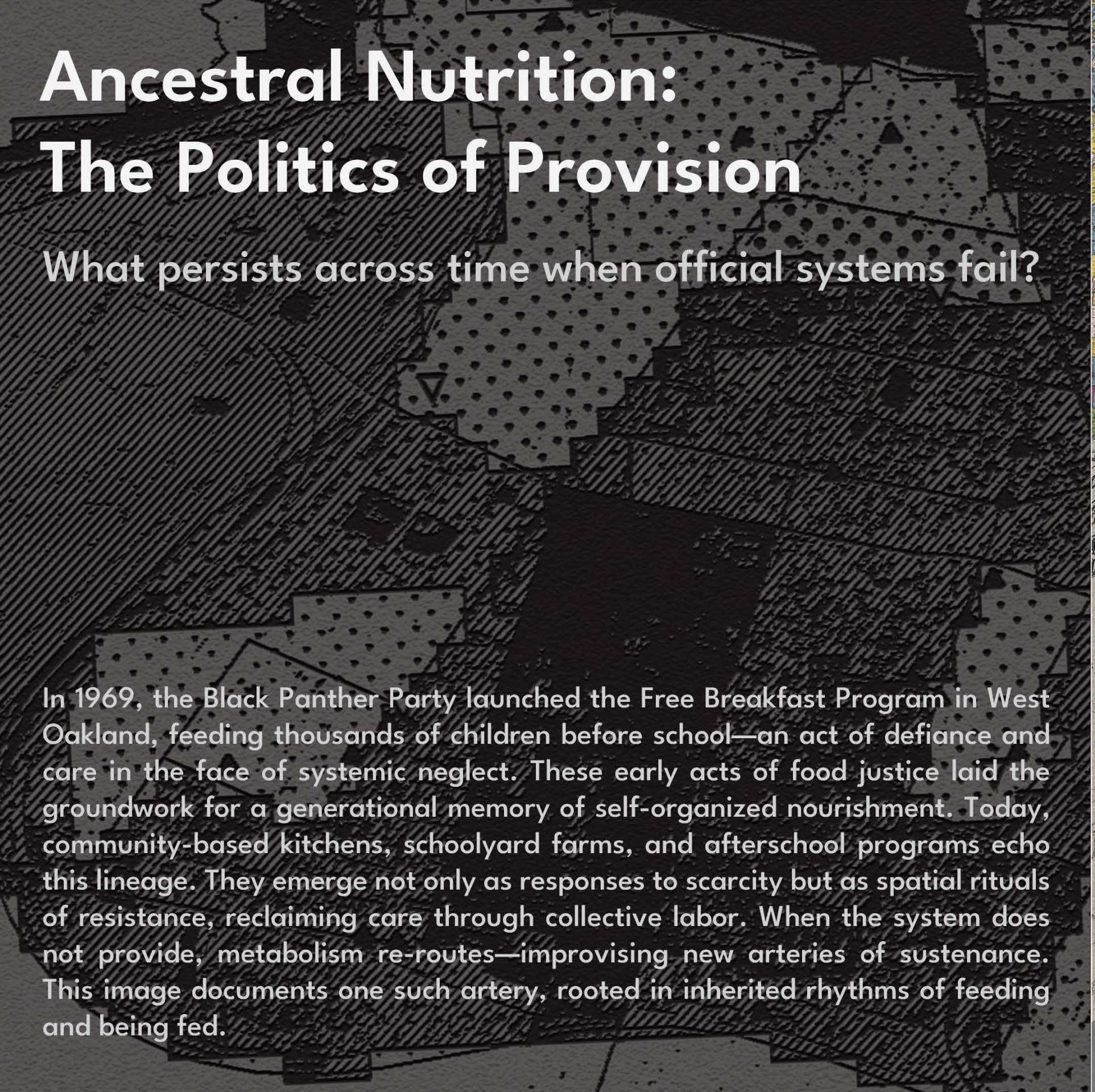
What are the perks and benefits people receive from living within a walking distance from BART? Are there proportional and positive correlations between distance, time of commute, housing development, and price?

JEROME KIM
DESIGN MEDIA 4
SPRING 2025





URBAN METABOLICS

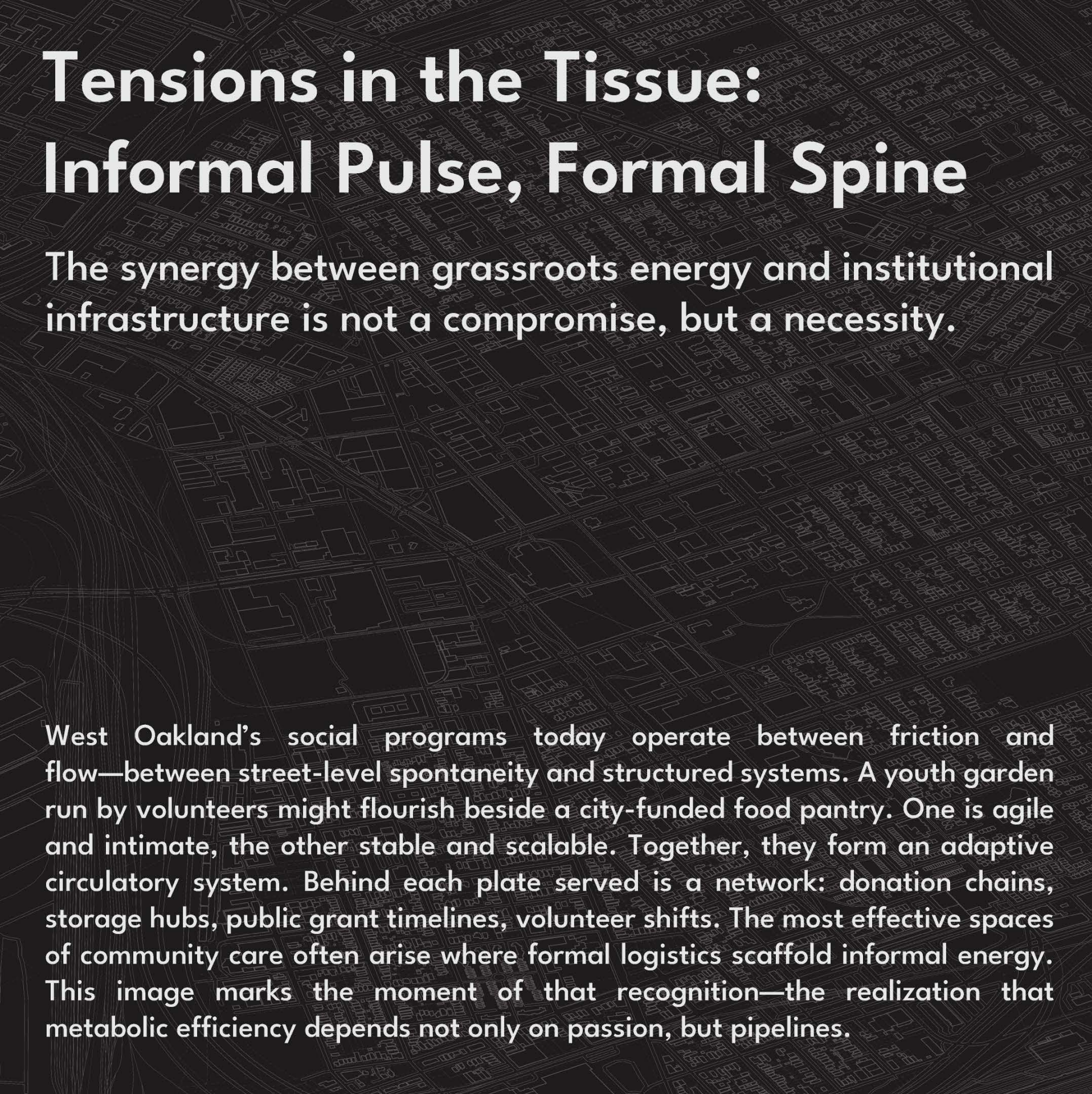
The background of the entire page is a dark, textured collage of various geometric patterns. These include a grid of small squares, a pattern of small dots, and areas with diagonal hatching. The patterns are layered and overlap, creating a complex, abstract visual field. The colors are primarily dark greys and blacks, with some lighter grey areas where the patterns intersect.

Ancestral Nutrition: The Politics of Provision

What persists across time when official systems fail?

In 1969, the Black Panther Party launched the Free Breakfast Program in West Oakland, feeding thousands of children before school—an act of defiance and care in the face of systemic neglect. These early acts of food justice laid the groundwork for a generational memory of self-organized nourishment. Today, community-based kitchens, schoolyard farms, and afterschool programs echo this lineage. They emerge not only as responses to scarcity but as spatial rituals of resistance, reclaiming care through collective labor. When the system does not provide, metabolism re-routes—improvising new arteries of sustenance. This image documents one such artery, rooted in inherited rhythms of feeding and being fed.



The background of the entire image is a dark, high-contrast aerial photograph of a city street grid. The streets are visible as a complex network of light-colored lines against the darker urban landscape. The text is overlaid on this background in a clean, white, sans-serif font.

Tensions in the Tissue: Informal Pulse, Formal Spine

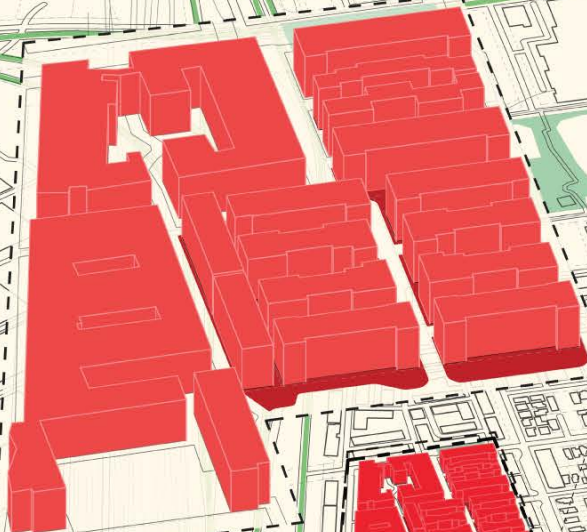
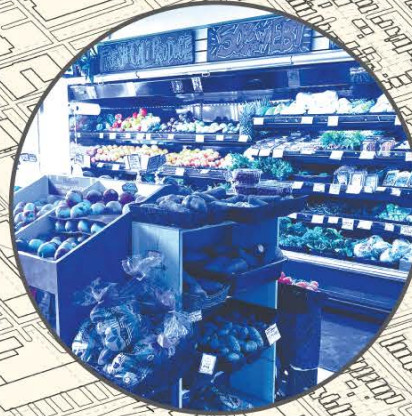
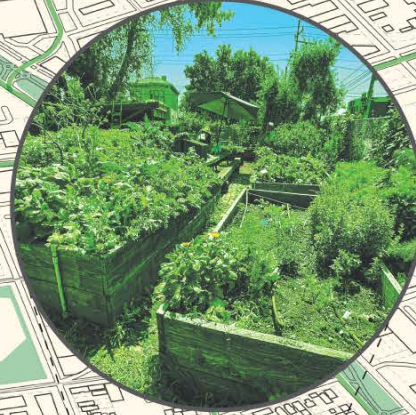
The synergy between grassroots energy and institutional infrastructure is not a compromise, but a necessity.

West Oakland's social programs today operate between friction and flow—between street-level spontaneity and structured systems. A youth garden run by volunteers might flourish beside a city-funded food pantry. One is agile and intimate, the other stable and scalable. Together, they form an adaptive circulatory system. Behind each plate served is a network: donation chains, storage hubs, public grant timelines, volunteer shifts. The most effective spaces of community care often arise where formal logistics scaffold informal energy. This image marks the moment of that recognition—the realization that metabolic efficiency depends not only on passion, but pipelines.

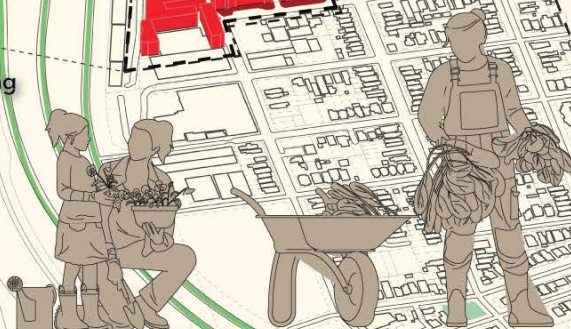
Community Building Catalyst

St. Mary's Center

West Oakland Farm Park



High Density
Affordable Housing



Bottoms Up Community Garden

Mandela Grocery Cooperative



Scaling the System: The Breath of the Bay

How does a city eat?

Zooming out, we trace the arterial map of food distribution across the Bay Area—from refrigerated trucks unloading at Safeway distribution centers in Tracy to locally sourced produce at Mandela Grocery Cooperative. The city metabolizes through both: globalized chains ensure volume and consistency; localized alternatives anchor food in community values. One is mass-efficient, the other socially resilient. Rather than opposites, they are complementary lobes of the same lung—inhalation and exhalation. This image presents the city not as a passive consumer, but as a metabolic body—digesting, distributing, and adapting to the flow of goods, people, and care.

FOOD LOGISTICS

Arjo Van Veenbo
 Los Finco Tartilleria Inc.
 Living Interiors
 Earth Seed Farm
 Luscious Loathers
 North Berkeley Farmers' Market
 Noma Tea
 Africa's Fajitas Los Mayas
 Alvarado Street Bakery
 Ancient Organics
 The Epicurean Trader
 The Epicurean Trader
 AVOCA Natural Handmade Hair Care
 Cafe Santana Rinsing Company
 Primavera
 Casa Sorchas Foods
 Prime Roots
 Red Bay Coffee Ferry Building
 Scale Chocierator
 Schone & Al Suenwa LLC
 Cream Co. Meats
 Desapora Co.
 Oakland Food Company
 Terapago
 Hark's Monte Coffee
 Hodo
 Vial's Juvy
 Wily To Life Bakery



MAKOTO KOMINE

Spring 2025,
Design Media Seminar: Urban Cultures
Bachelors of Architecture
California College of the Arts, San Francisco
Instructor: Julia Grinkrug

Where do You Spend Your Time?

MAP OF
OAKLAND
AND
ALAMEDA.

WOODWARD & TAGGART,
AGENTS

FOR THE PURCHASE, SALE, APPRAISAL AND CARE OF

REAL ESTATE.

460 & 462 Eighth Street near Broadway,
OAKLAND.

W. K. H. & C. L.
Surveyors.

Canal Reservation.

LOCAL LINE

BARCLAY LINE

SLIP
AD. WARD & SLIP
C.P.R.R. RESERVATION.
Canal Reservation

Oakland Harbor Improvements, note in course of
construction by U.S. Government.

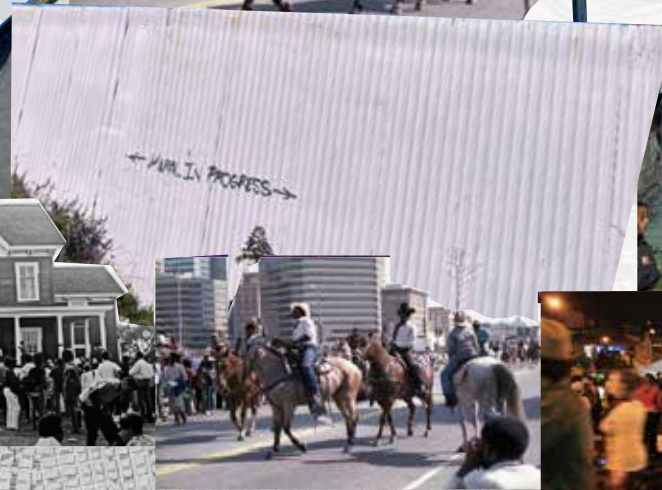
How do you spend your free time in Oakland?
Do you check out the neighborhood parks?
Attend large events? There is plenty to do here!

In West Oakland, there are a lot of chances to gather as a community
and attend large scale events. I have discovered some of the many different
types of leisure in the city



- ✓ Parks
- ✓ alco_schools
- ✓ OaklandCityLimits
- ✓ Features_20250207
- ✓ OSM Standard
- ✓ gadm41_USA_0
- Black Cowboy Parade Path

Where do you find Leisure?



1770

The Ohlone people lived in the east bay. In their free time, they would play betting games, had village gossip, and taught children how to be adults.

1820

Luis Maria Peralta was granted land, which would evolve into what we know as West Oakland.

1907

DeFremery Park Established as First Municipal Playground

1937

The first boys' club in Oakland was established, known as West Oakland Boys Rec Center, providing recreation activities for young boys in the community.

1945

The Continental Club opens in West Oakland. The club hosts music artists such as Ray Charles, Jimi Hendrix, Aretha Franklin, etc.

1975

The first Oakland Black Cowboy Parade was held. It celebrates the contributions of black cowboys to the American West.

1980

The Malcom X Jazz Arts Festival is first held. The festival celebrates jazz, arts, and Black culture in West Oakland.

2006

The Oakland Art Murrur, a monthly First Friday art walk, begins. West Oakland artists participate in the gathering of arts and music.

2010

The People's Kitchen Collective organized community dining events in West Oakland.

2021

Liberation Park was established in West Oakland, hosting markets, festivals, and community gatherings to reclaim space for black joy.

I want to check out Defremery Park!
Lets head there now!

Even with these large scale leisure events happening in West Oakland, there are still opportunities of a smaller scale leisure on your way to these events. Front porch culture is ever present in the Prescott neighborhood. It is common for residents to gather at the front porch or yard of their house to spend their leisure time. However, some houses do not have these porches as a result of housing code.



WHERE LEISURE HAPPENS

The diagram illustrates a proposed urban layout for leisure activities. A central intersection is highlighted with a thick purple line, indicating a key location for leisure. A dashed purple line connects this intersection to a larger area labeled 'DeFremery Park' and 'Panther ShS Plaza'. The diagram includes 3D building models, silhouettes of people walking and sitting, and a detailed view of a building complex with stairs and walkways.

Shall we check out the shoreline?
I want to hang out by the water!
But thats where all the smelly ships are!

Zooming out to get an overview of the entirety of Oakland, we can see the results of decades worth of injustice. Why is that West Oakland is surrounded by industrial zones and little green space? Even with the amount of provided parks and green spaces in the area, why are they surrounded by industrial zones?

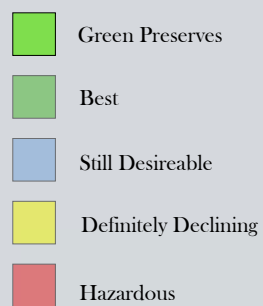


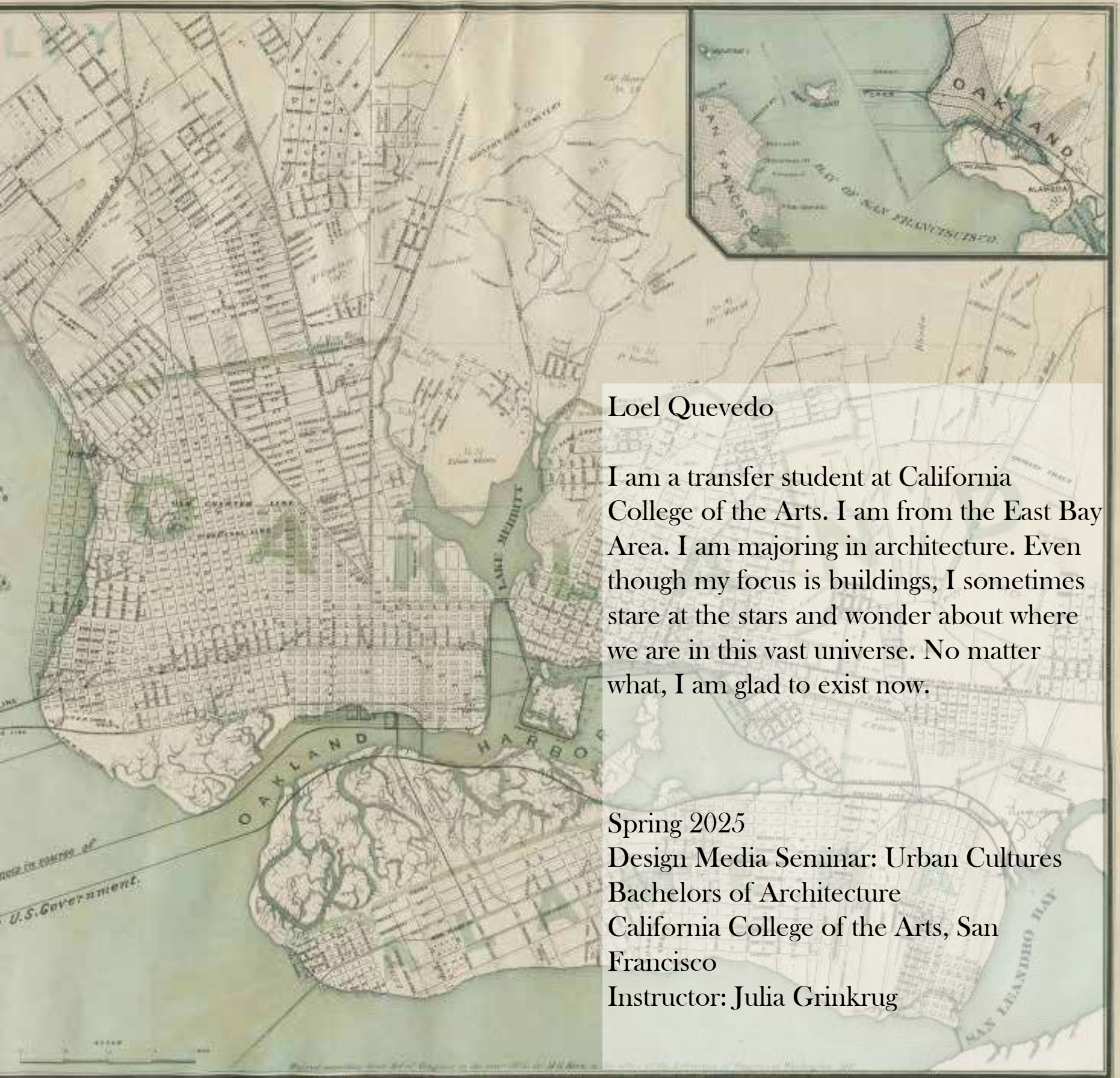
RECLAIMING NATURE

How does industrial zoning and redlining limit access to natural green spaces and preserves?

Middle Harbor Shoreline

MLK Shoreline





Loel Quevedo

I am a transfer student at California College of the Arts. I am from the East Bay Area. I am majoring in architecture. Even though my focus is buildings, I sometimes stare at the stars and wonder about where we are in this vast universe. No matter what, I am glad to exist now.

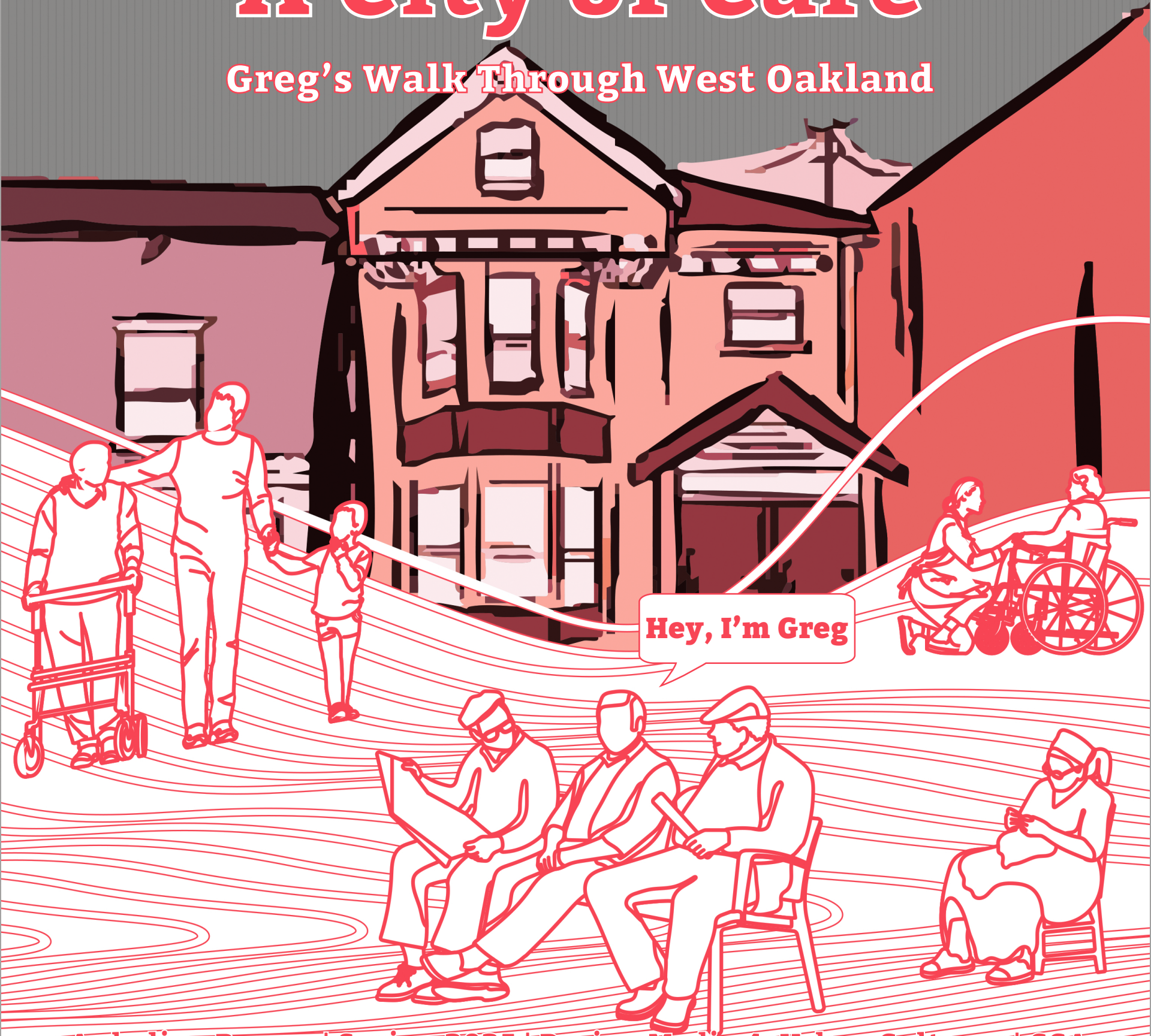
Spring 2025

Design Media Seminar: Urban Cultures
Bachelors of Architecture
California College of the Arts, San Francisco

Instructor: Julia Grinkrug

A City of Care

Greg's Walk Through West Oakland



What is a city of care?

Is care a matter of infrastructure—or intimacy?
Is it found in city plans, or in the ways we show up for each other?

Greg might have the answer.
He's lived in West Oakland his whole life.
He doesn't drive anymore, but every day, he walks.

This story follows Greg's steps through the past, present, and possible future of care in the Prescott neighborhood.



Elders as the Archive

How do U want to age? what if your loved ones lived here?

← MURAL IN PROGRESS →

Legend:

- West Oakland
- East Oakland
- Central Oakland
- South Oakland
- North Oakland
- East Oakland
- West Oakland
- Central Oakland
- South Oakland
- North Oakland

Timeline:

- Pre-Colonial Era (Before Late 18th Century)**
 - Native Presence: The land was inhabited by Chochenyo-speaking Native Americans, who lived by hunting, gathering, and agriculture.
- Colonial Mission Era (Late 18th - Early 19th Century)**
 - Spanish Colonization: Spanish missionaries and soldiers arrived, bringing the Catholic faith and introducing the use of the word "mission".
- Early Industrialization (Mid-19th Century)**
 - Port and Railroad Development: Oakland was founded as a trading port and later became a major center for the shipping and railroad industries.
- Streetcar Era (Late 19th - Early 20th Century)**
 - Urban Expansion: Streetcars and the development of the city center led to the growth of the city and the establishment of new commercial and residential areas.
- Automobile Era (Early-Mid 20th Century)**
 - Automobile-Driven Development: The rise of the automobile led to the development of the city's infrastructure, including highways and parking lots.
- World War II Era (Mid-20th Century)**
 - Black Migration: Black residents moved to Oakland in large numbers during the war, seeking employment and better living conditions.
- Post-War Era (Mid-Late 20th Century)**
 - Urban Renewal and Highway Construction: The construction of highways and the demolition of urban areas led to the displacement of many residents.
- Contemporary Era (Late 20th - 21st Century)**
 - Immigration and Diversity: Oakland has become a diverse city, with a large population of immigrants from various countries.

← MURAL IN PROGRESS →

How do U want to age?
What if your loved ones lived here?

West, Oakland	
SNAP Supermarkets, Oakland	
Major medical facilities	
Oakland Senior Planning Center	
5 min. walk to parks in west oakland	
Families with Children in Poverty	
✓	0 - 1.9
✓	1.9 - 6.2
✓	6.2 - 15.7
✓	15.7 - 23.6
✓	23.6 - 28.5
✓	28.5 - 34
✓	34 - 39.6
✓	39.6 - 46.9
✓	46.9 - 58
✓	58 - 71.9

Pre-Colonial Era (Before Late 18th Century)

Colonial/Mission Era (late 18th - Early 19th Century)

Early Industrialization (Mid-Late 19th Century)

Streetcar Era (Late 19th - Early 20th Century)

Automobile Era (Early-Mid 20th Century)

World War II Era 1941-1945: 1941-1945

Post-War Era (Mid-Late 20th Century)

Castellonari (Ex Date 20th - 21st Century)

Ohlone Presence: The land was inhabited by Chochemyo-speaking Ohlone peoples, who lived as hunter-gatherers and small-scale

- Spanish Colonization: Spanish colonialists arrived, displacing the Ohlone people and disrupting their way of life

- **Port and Railroad Development:** Oakland was founded as a sailing and trading port in 1852 and grew into a commercial and industrial center due to its interface

- **Expansion Along Streetcar Lines:** Development and population growth spread along the streetcar routes, creating new commercial strips and

- **Automobile-Oriented Development** of automobiles led to the development of suburbs, which were large oil-lights to people of color, leaving

- Black Migration: Black migrants arrived in large numbers from the South during the military

- **White Flight and Suburbanization:** suburban areas, while Black ghetto to the North and East

- **Immigration and Gentrification:** Immigrants from Europe, Asia, and East Africa settled across the city. As the city grew, middle-class migrants (gentrifiers) moved into various parts of the city.

- **Emergence of a Radial Metropolis:** Electric streetcars enabled increased personal mobility, transforming Oakland into a

residential areas

- Increased Socio-Spatial Segregation
Automobile use enhanced a sense of individual freedom but also intensified

...causing rapid demographic change

- **Growth of Black Culture and Politics**
Center of Black culture and politics
- **Urban Renewal and Highway Construction**
Urban renewal projects and highway construction

- **Housing Crisis:** Oakland experienced a rapid increase in homelessness amid lopsided privatization of urban development.
- **Oakland's "Hella Town" Identity:** Use to...

This micrograph shows a cross-section of a muscle fiber. A large, dark, oval-shaped nucleus is visible near the center of the fiber. The surrounding cytoplasm is filled with numerous small, dark, rod-like structures, which are likely myofibrils or myofibrillar proteins, arranged in a somewhat disorganized manner.

30

radial metropolis

Socio-spatial segregation and the
of neighborhoods by race and class

Disinvestment in the Wetlands.

- Ongoing community activism addresses

Non-seniors
15.1%

**Greg isn't alone on this block.
Nearly 85% of the people here are seniors.
Some live next door, others stop by St.
Mary's for a hot meal or company.**

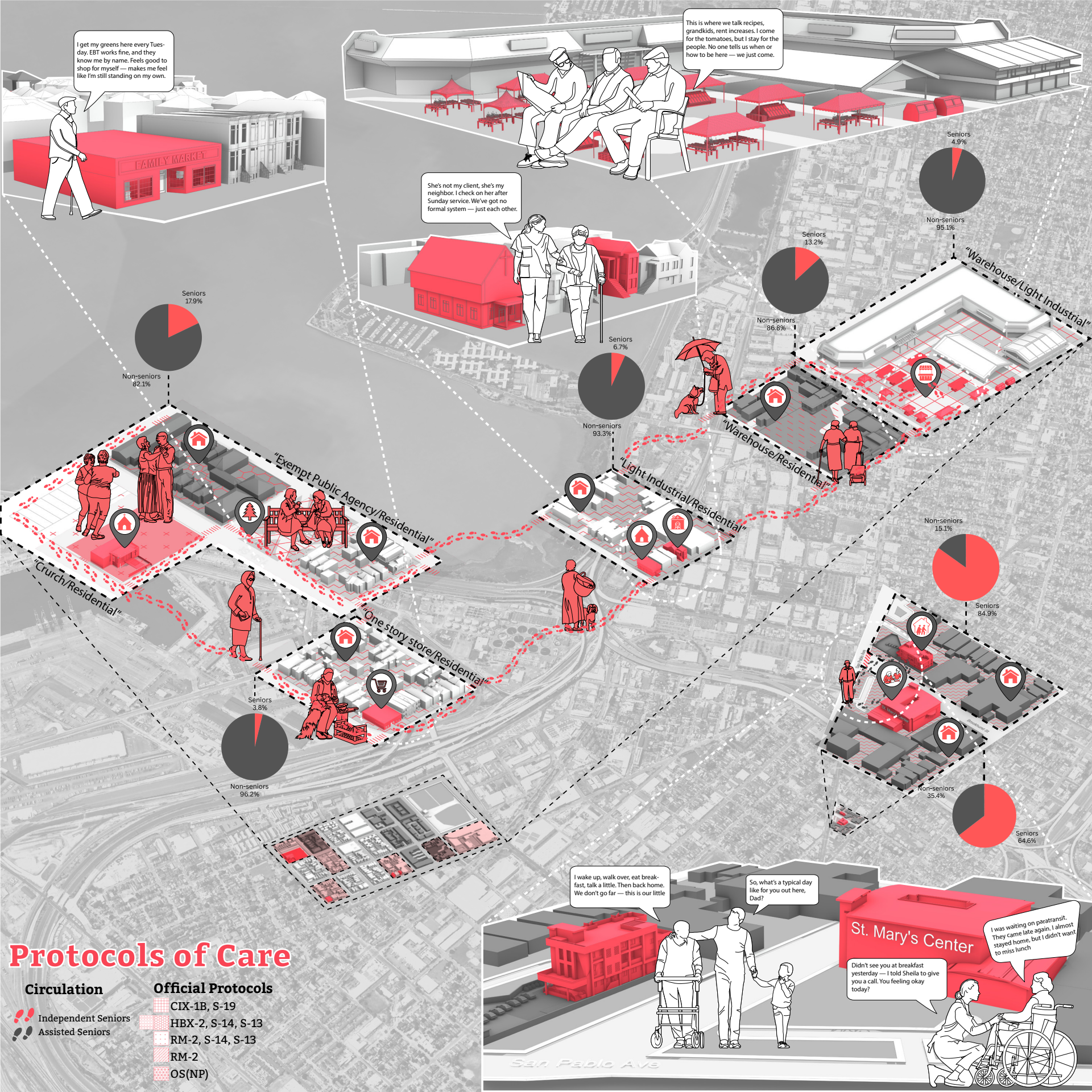
**No one maps these movements.
No policy measures who checks in or who
walks with you to the clinic.**

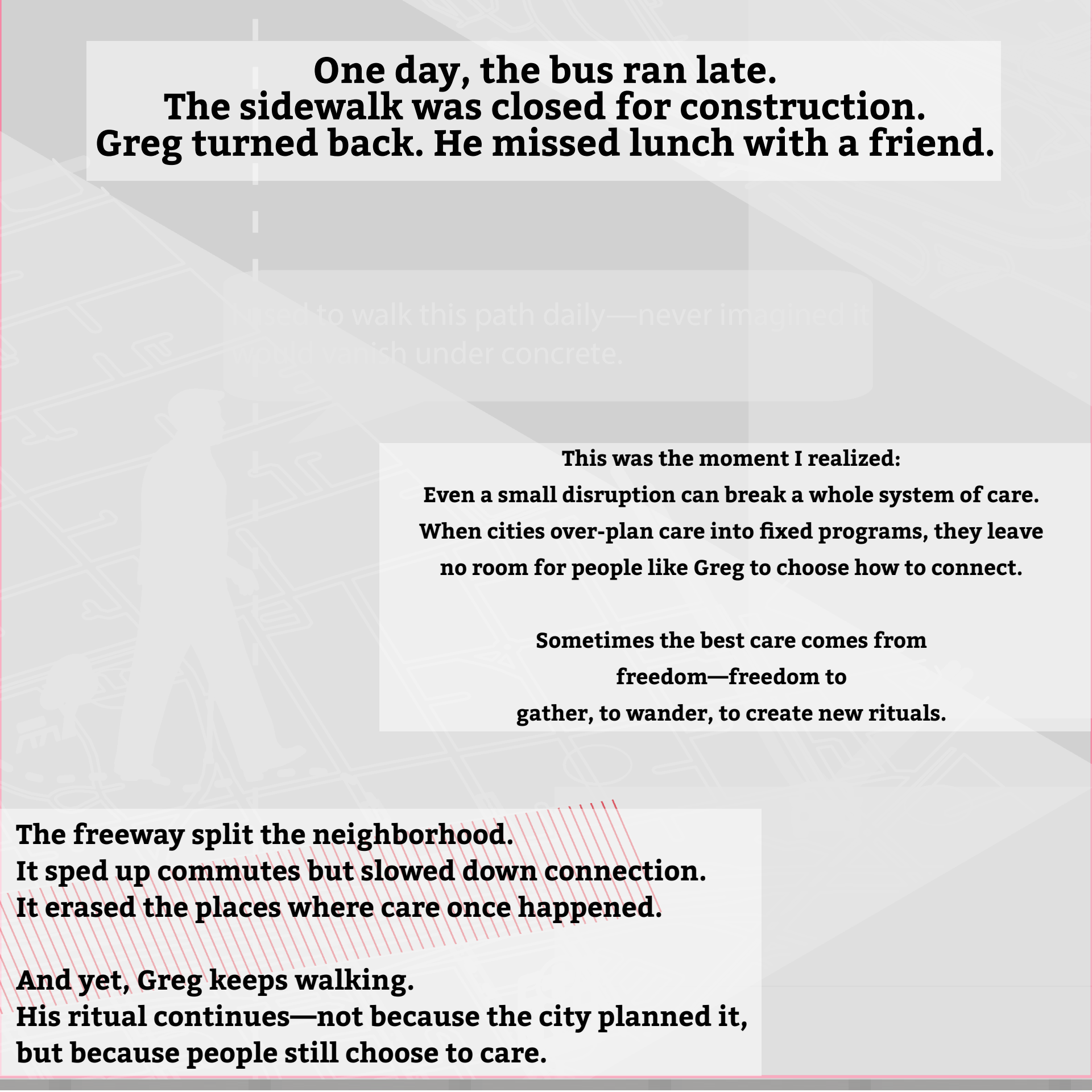
**This care isn't scheduled.
It's lived—quiet, shared, and constant.**

Seniors
84.9%

**Most folks here are like me. We don't
just live here—we hold it together.**







**One day, the bus ran late.
The sidewalk was closed for construction.
Greg turned back. He missed lunch with a friend.**

**I used to walk this path daily—never imagined it
would vanish under concrete.**

**This was the moment I realized:
Even a small disruption can break a whole system of care.
When cities over-plan care into fixed programs, they leave
no room for people like Greg to choose how to connect.**

**Sometimes the best care comes from
freedom—freedom to
gather, to wander, to create new rituals.**

**The freeway split the neighborhood.
It sped up commutes but slowed down connection.
It erased the places where care once happened.**

**And yet, Greg keeps walking.
His ritual continues—not because the city planned it,
but because people still choose to care.**

Regional Flows, Local Fractures

Lines of Disruption

“Three paths: one collapsed, one built, one resisted.”

The freeways do not simply run through Oakland—they mark it. One was dropped from above, crushing blocks and bodies before it was dismantled. Another cuts the edge clean, like a surgical bypass. A third never arrived—halted at the boundary by voices too often ignored. Together, they form a map of intentions: built, buried, and broken.

Greg's Broken Ritual

This was not a commute—it was continuity. A social infrastructure built on sidewalks, time, and knowing where to stop and who to wave to.

When I-980 was built, the route collapsed. What had been one continuous circuit became a jagged loop of detours. The walk remained possible—but not without friction, not without loss.

Demolished Blocks

“Over 600 homes and 100+ businesses were demolished to make room for I-980.”

Entire blocks were cleared to carve a linear cut through West Oakland. Homes, corner stores, Black-owned laundromats, churches, and community centers vanished be-

~600 housing units destroyed

100+ local businesses closed

Families moved to East Oakland, Vallejo, and Hayward

Longtime renters rarely compensated



Regionally Connected

“Highways and BART connected the Bay Area—Richmond to Pacifica, Concord to Daly City—while bypassing the people living just below.”

The I-980 trench completed a circuit for the region—faster freight, smoother commutes, more seamless suburban visits. It offered connection across space, but not across streets. What was gained in efficiency was lost in intimacy.

THE CYPRESS FREEWAY WAS A DOUBLE-DECKER THAT SPLIT WEST OAKLAND IN HALF. AFTER THE 1989 QUAKE, IT WAS REMOVED AND REBUILT AWAY FROM HOMES.

I-980 WAS BUILT TO CONNECT DOWNTOWN TO I-580. IT CUT THROUGH 12 STREETS AND DEMOLISHED OVER 500 BUILDINGS.

New info to include:

Width: ~560 feet (wider than a football field)

It replaced part of Brush Street and disconnected Peralta, Filbert, and Market

Only 2 pedestrian crossings exist over the entire trenchsum

We fought back—and for once, they listened.”
—Marsha, 1982 lawsuit organizer

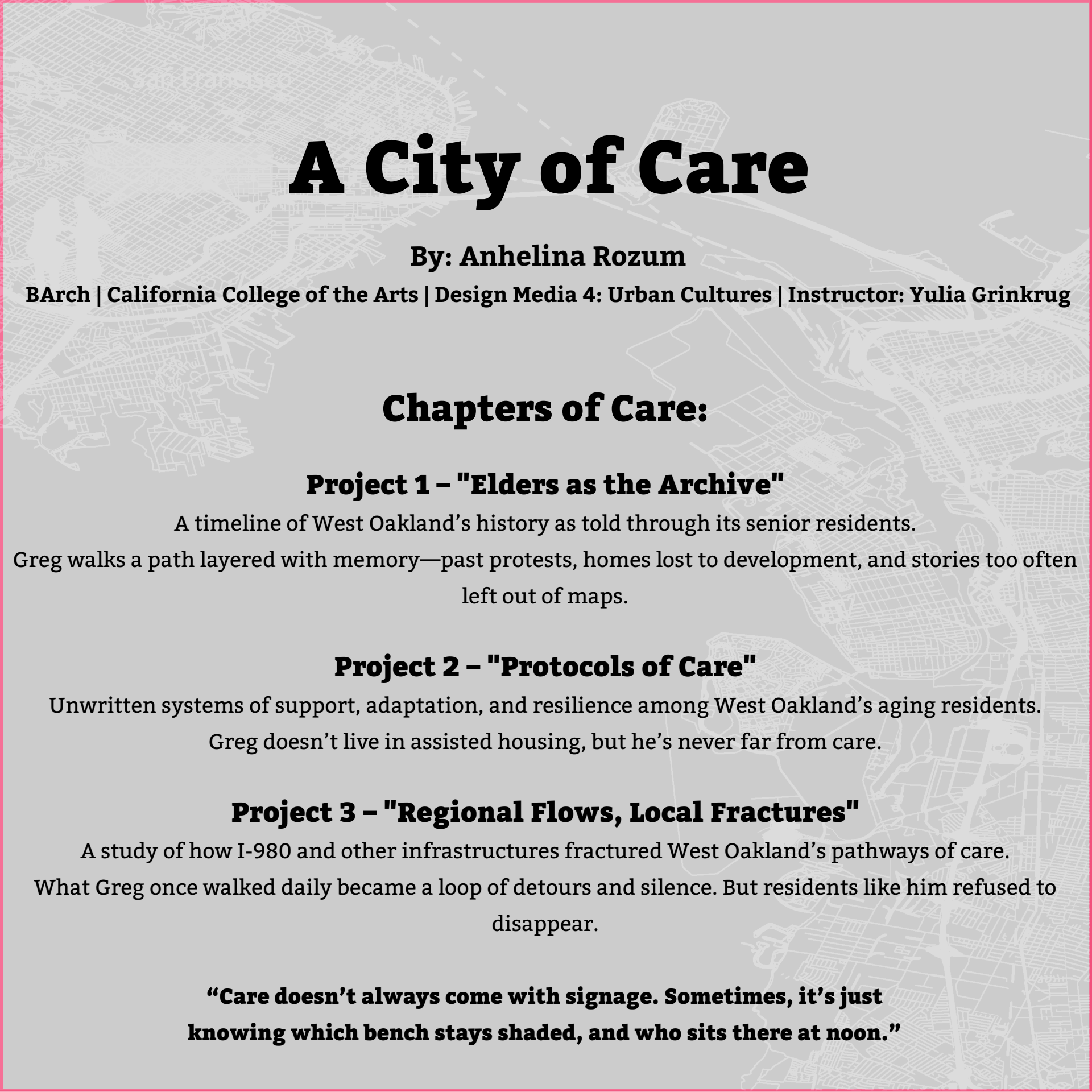
GROVE SHAFTER FREEWAY WAS STOPPED BEFORE IT COULD SPLIT WEST OAKLAND. RESIDENTS SUED IN 1981 AND WON.

Displacement was not temporary
—it was total.

Buildings removed (1978–1982)

We never used to come here.
Now it's just a quick drive.

What kind of city grows when care is left unplanned?



A City of Care

By: Anhelina Rozum

BArch | California College of the Arts | Design Media 4: Urban Cultures | Instructor: Yulia Grinkrug

Chapters of Care:

Project 1 – "Elders as the Archive"

A timeline of West Oakland's history as told through its senior residents.

Greg walks a path layered with memory—past protests, homes lost to development, and stories too often left out of maps.

Project 2 – "Protocols of Care"

Unwritten systems of support, adaptation, and resilience among West Oakland's aging residents.

Greg doesn't live in assisted housing, but he's never far from care.

Project 3 – "Regional Flows, Local Fractures"

A study of how I-980 and other infrastructures fractured West Oakland's pathways of care.

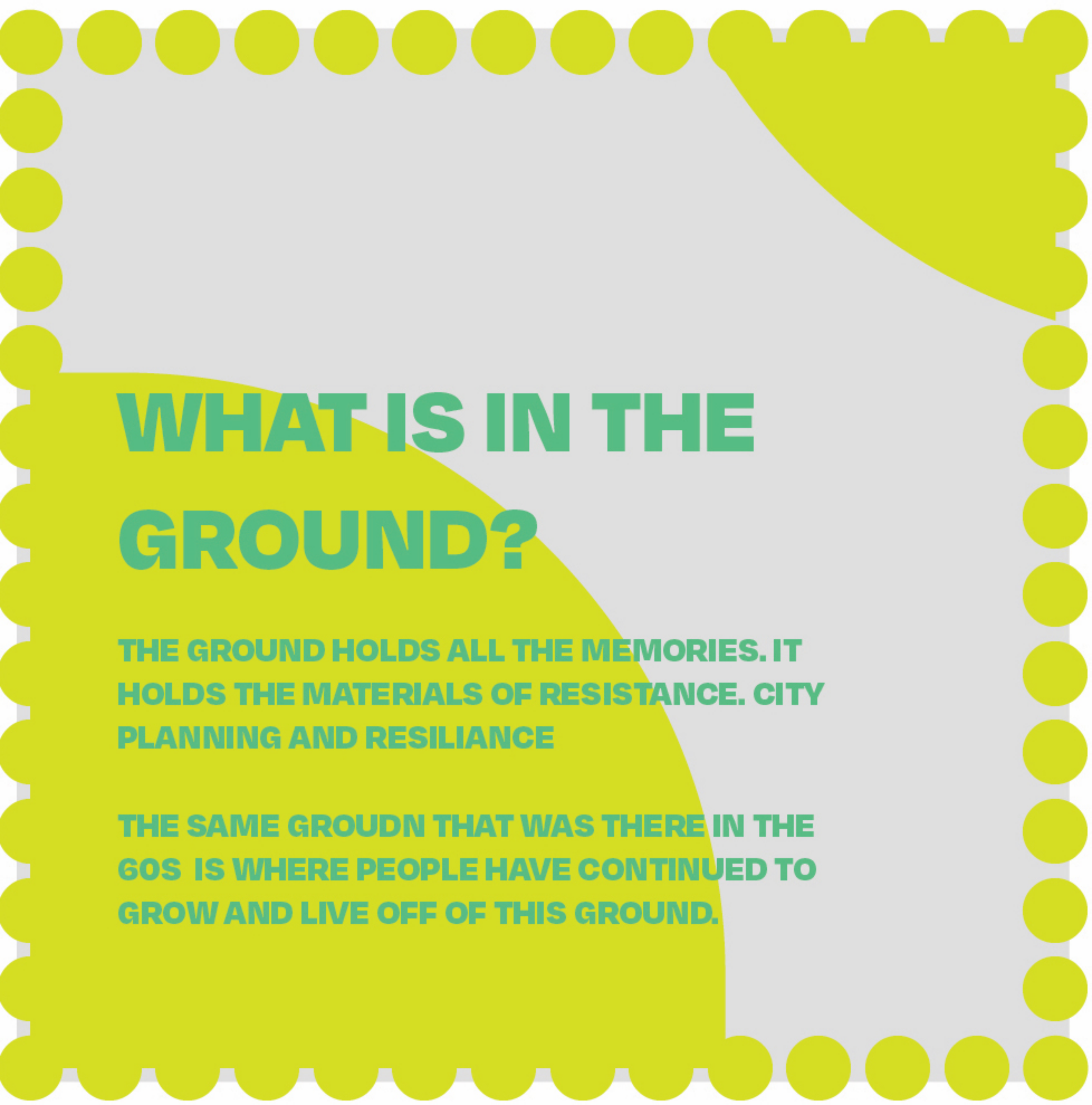
What Greg once walked daily became a loop of detours and silence. But residents like him refused to disappear.

"Care doesn't always come with signage. Sometimes, it's just knowing which bench stays shaded, and who sits there at noon."



WHERE IS YOUR GARDEN?

AMIRA SEALE



WHAT IS IN THE GROUND?

**THE GROUND HOLDS ALL THE MEMORIES. IT
HOLDS THE MATERIALS OF RESISTANCE. CITY
PLANNING AND RESILIENCE**

**THE SAME GROUND THAT WAS THERE IN THE
60S IS WHERE PEOPLE HAVE CONTINUED TO
GROW AND LIVE OFF OF THIS GROUND.**

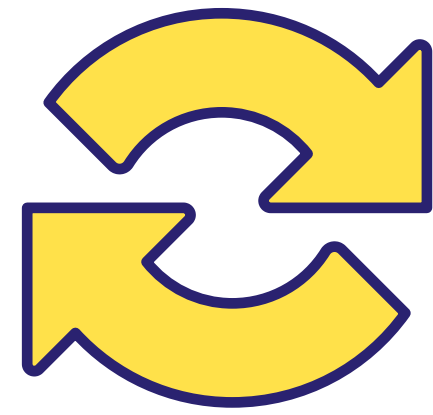
WHAT CAN BE REDIRECTED TO SUPPORT WHAT IS WORKING?

THE VISION IS TO BUILD UPON THE SPACES THAT
ALREADY EXIST. THE GARDEN AND THE HOME ARE
DIFFERENT, I WONDER WHAT COULD HAPPEN IF
THEY WERENT. WHAT IF YOUR HOME WAS A PLACE
TO APPLY WHAT YOU LEARN ABOUT GARDENING.
BUILT INTO THE HOME IN THE FIRST PLACE.

WHAT IF THE HOUSE WAS THE GARDEN



"Falling Fruit is a celebration of the overlooked culinary bounty of our city streets. By quantifying this resource on an interactive map, we hope to facilitate intimate connections between people, food, and the natural organisms growing in our neighborhoods. Not just a free lunch! Foraging in the 21st century is an opportunity for urban exploration, to fight the scourge of stained sidewalks, and to reconnect with the botanical origins of food."



Former garden at 1620 7th st. This was a community garden for people who were formally incarcerated. The program however mysteriously ended, due to the Black Panther housing breaking ground.

Acta Non Verba: Youth Urban Farm Project's (ANV) mission is to elevate life for youth and their families in Oakland and beyond by challenging oppressive dynamics and environments through urban farming and access to the natural environment

We care about our communities and the environment. Guided by these principles, we aim to build partnerships with community-led organizations to build thriving local food systems and grow community health.

Social connections are important because they help lower stress, improve resilience and provide support during difficult times in life. A strong sense of belonging lowers your risk of depression, anxiety and suicide.

It is unlawful for any person to keep any ducks, geese, chickens or other fowls in any enclosure in the city unless the exterior boundaries of said enclosures are more than twenty (20) feet from any dwelling, church or school. It is unlawful for any person to keep, harbor or maintain roosters within the city limit.

Night Markets Are Bringing Back Bay Area Nightlife, One Neighborhood at a Time

BOTTOMS UP GARDEN

WEST OAKLAND NIGHT MARKET

CAMPBELL VILLAGE

TAKING THE KNOWLEDGE HOEM AND HAVE SOMWHERE TO APPLY IT

FRUIT TREE POTENTIAL

PRESCOT ELEMENTARY GARDEN

HOW TO COLLECT MORE ENERGY



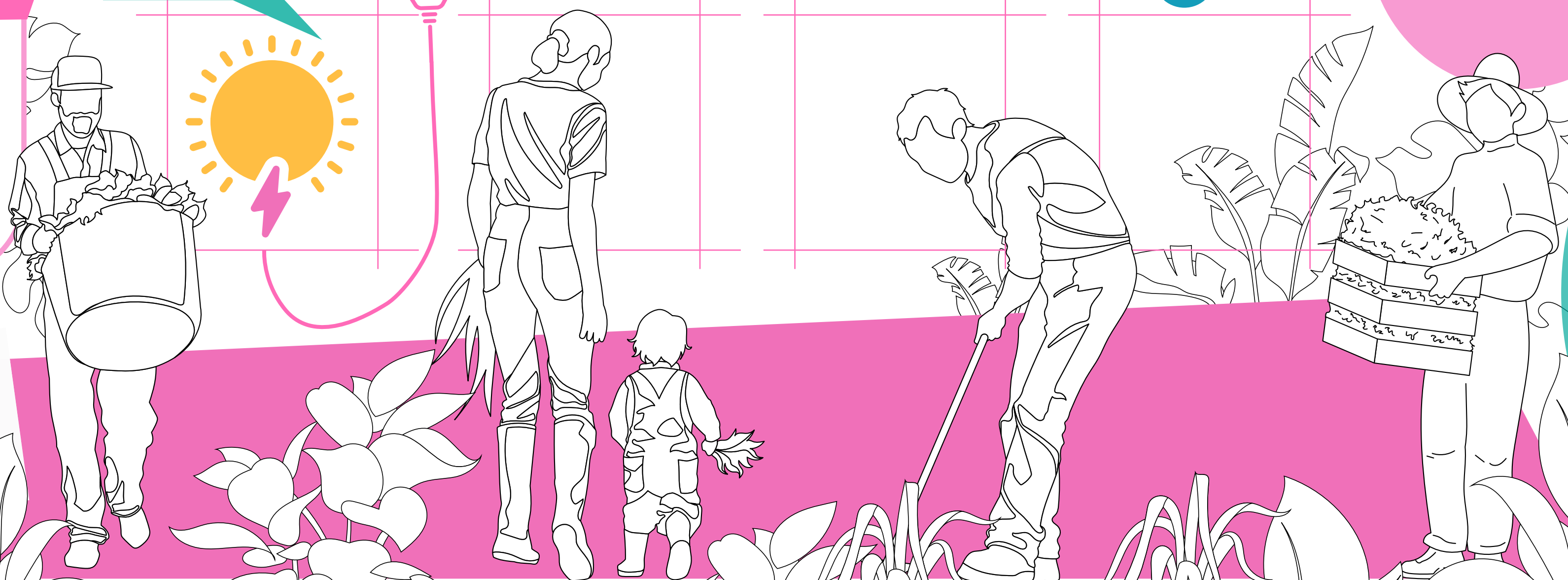
Obstacles that Prevent Longevity for the garden in an urban setting.

- + Funding
- +Community engagement
- +Time
- + Vandalism

Our edible map is not the first of its kind, but it aspires to be the world's most comprehensive. While our users contribute locations of their own, we comb the internet for pre-existing knowledge, seeking to unite the efforts of foragers, foresters, and freegans everywhere



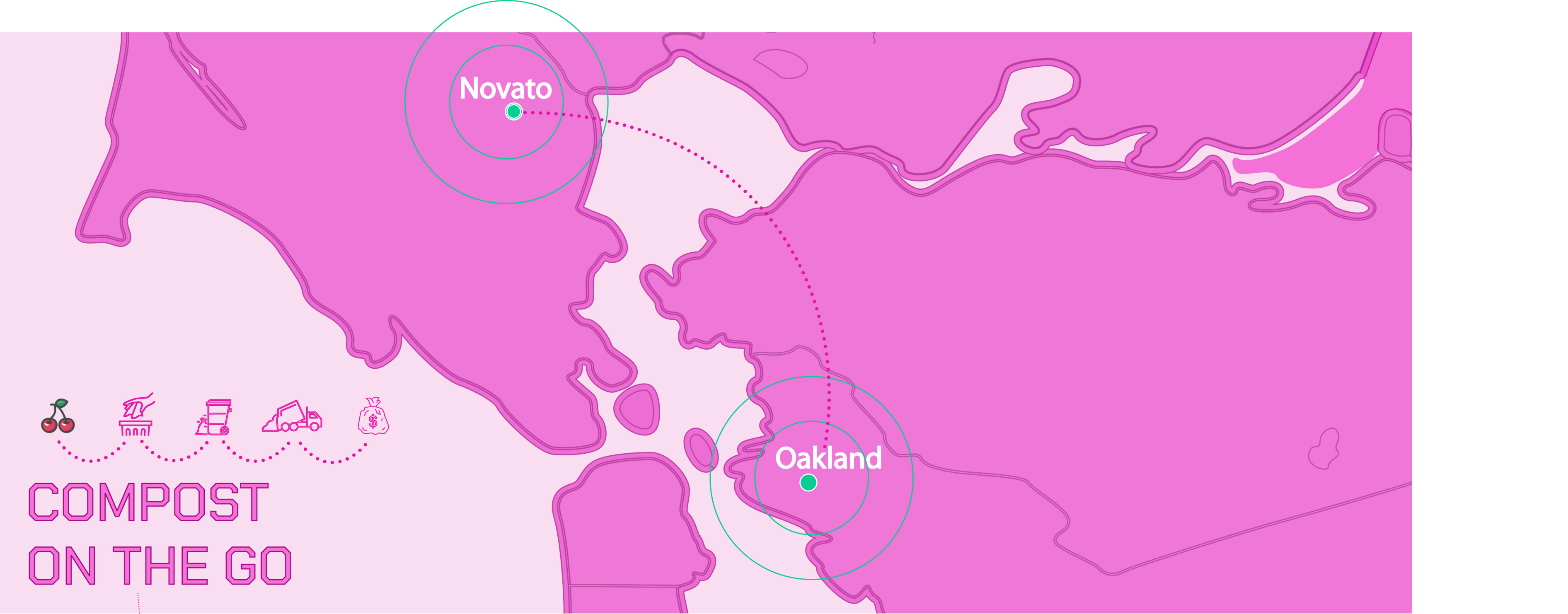
THIS IMAGE IS NOT INTENDED TO SUGGEST GREENWASHING IN ANY WAY. THE STUDY THAT IS ON DISPLAY IS TO ILLUSTRATE HOW LOCAL FARMS AND ORGANIZATIONS HAVE CONTINUED TO PROVIDE ACCESS TO NATURE AND HEALTHY FOOD.



WHAT DOES THIS SYSTEM EVEN OFFER?

**THIS SYSTEM IS BOGUS, WE SEPERATE OUR FOOD
AND PUT IT IN A BOX. SOMEONE TAKES THAT BOX AND
SELLS THE STUFF BACK TO US.**

**IF THAT SAME MATERIAL WHAT USED FOR FARMING IT
WOULD MAKE SENSE, BUT WASTE MANAGMENT JUST
TURNS MY WASTE INTO MONEY.**

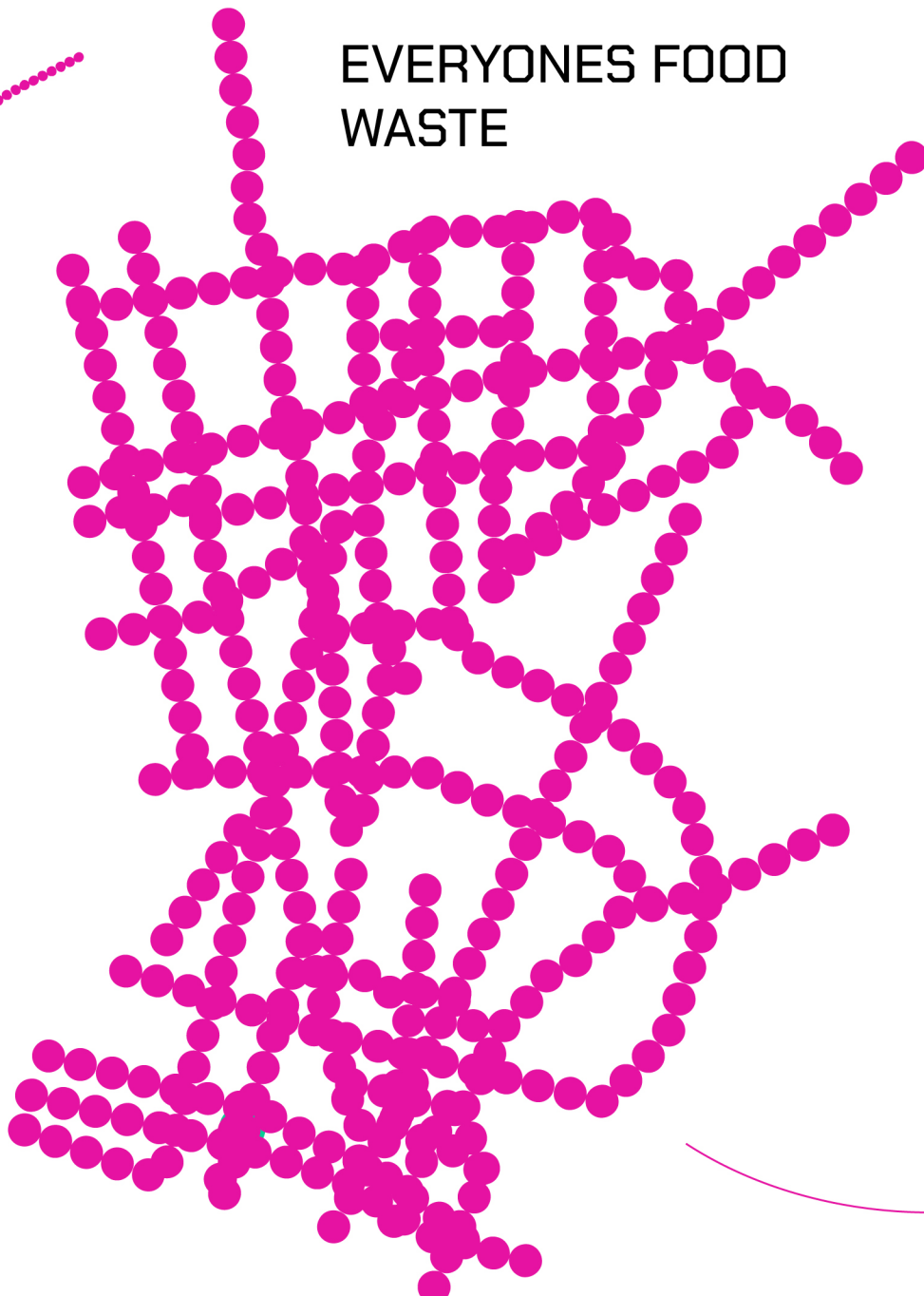


COMPOST ON THE GO

TRASH DAY PICKUP ROUT



EVERYONES FOOD WASTE



Local gardens either make their own compost or purchase from farming stores. To circulate the compost in the community. We could process the scraps from the food that comes from the community gardens.

If only the state did not mandate composting"



What if we took our food waste and put it back into local gardens without a Waste Managment bill? We could provide our own compost. Everything that you need to compost is infront of you. "fun fact, paper grocery bags are used as layers for compost processing"



Regulation: Oakland requires all properties to have trash, recycle, and compost collection services, and SB 1383, a California state law, encourages the reduction of compostable materials in landfills.



Regulation: Oakland requires all properties to have trash, recycle, and compost collection services, and SB 1383, a California state law, encourages the reduction of compostable materials in landfills.



"At our facility in Vacaville, CA we now offer worm casting compost. Recovered food scraps are diverted from the landfill and feed our "Red Wigglers," who break down the organic materials into a nutrient-dense soil amendment. Get it while it's hot!" The compost is a state mandate and sold back to the people.



Davis Street Compost Facility," San Leandro is the closest location to our site in West Oakland. Bags are typically \$30-\$40 a bag. Mulch is the only product that is available for gardening.



**MY GARDEN IS MY
HOME.**

AMIRA SEALE

